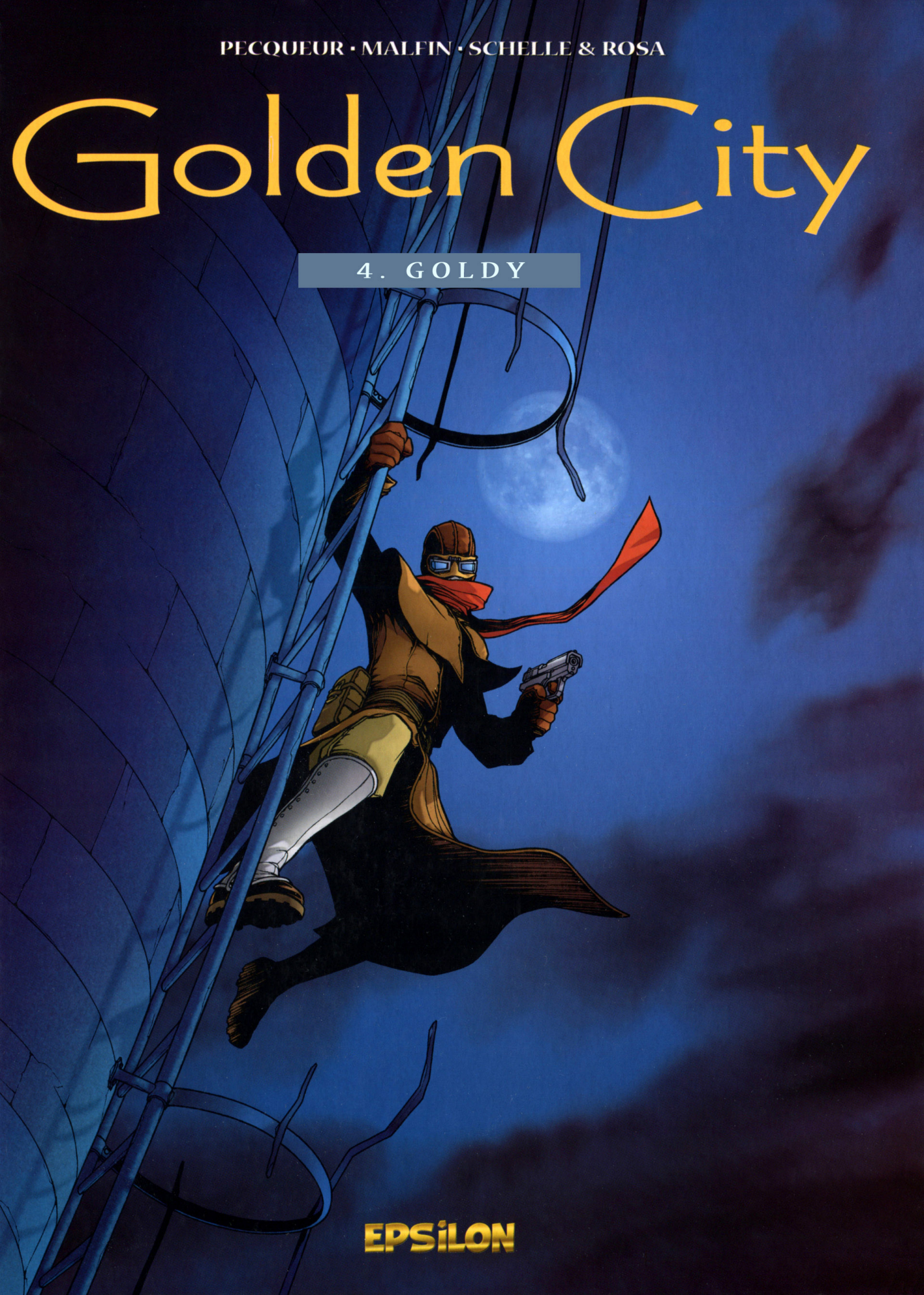
PECQUEUR · MALFIN · SCHELLE & ROSA

Golden City

4. GOLDY



EPSILON

NEOPOLIS

Golden City

4. GOLDY

Story
Daniel PECQUEUR

Art
Nicolas MALFIN

Colors
Pierre SCHELLE & Stéphane ROSA

Translation
ALICE

DELCOURT

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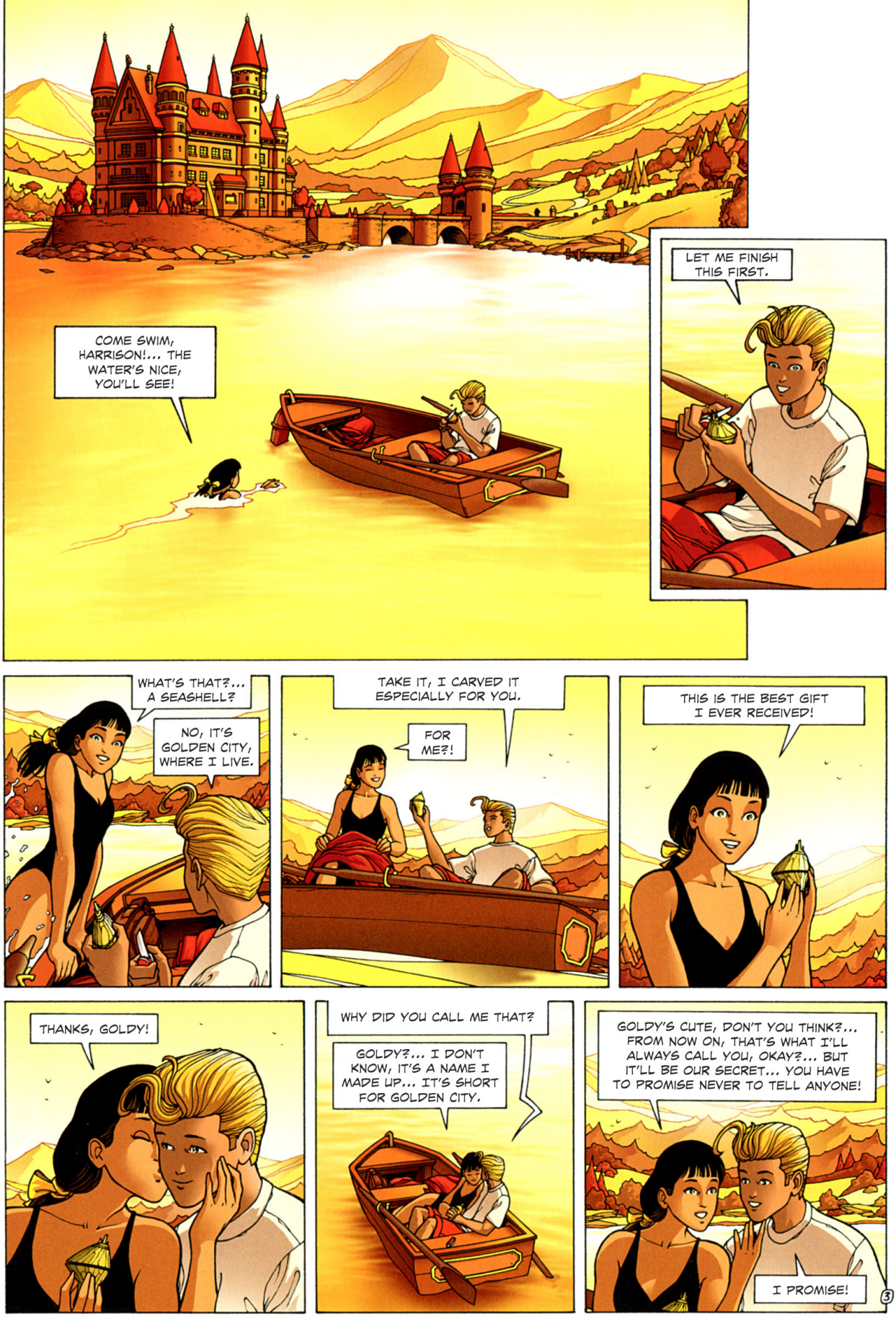
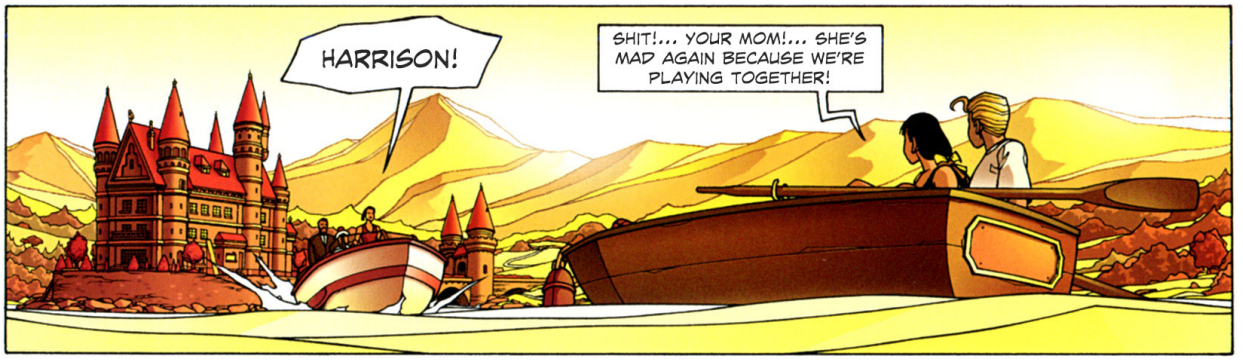
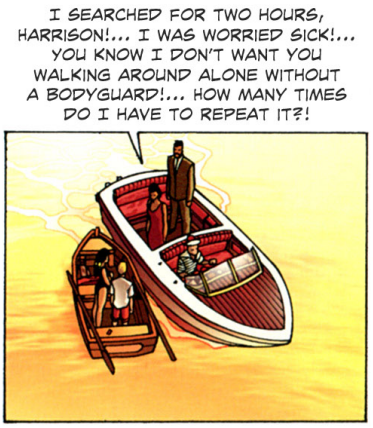
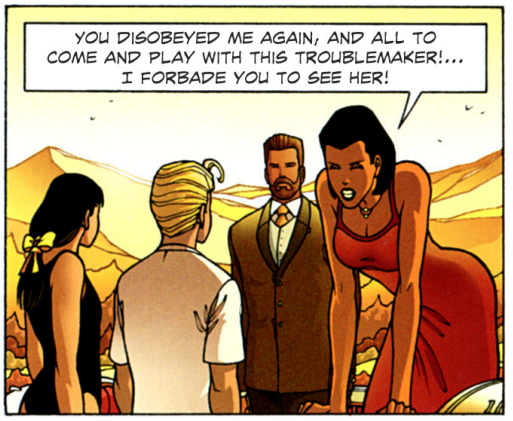
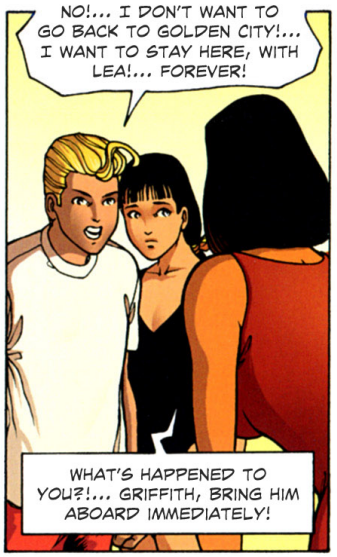

COME SWIM, HARRISON!... THE WATER'S NICE, YOU'LL SEE!
LET ME FINISH THIS FIRST.
WHAT'S THAT?... A SEASHELL?
NO, IT'S GOLDEN CITY, WHERE I LIVE.
TAKE IT, I CARVED IT ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.
FOR ME?!
THIS IS THE BEST GIFT I EVER RECEIVED!
THANKS, GOLDY!
WHY DID YOU CALL ME THAT?
GOLDY?... I DON'T KNOW, IT'S A NAME I MADE UP... IT'S SHORT FOR GOLDEN CITY.
GOLDY'S CUTE, DON'T YOU THINK?... FROM NOW ON, THAT'S WHAT I'LL ALWAYS CALL YOU, OKAY?... BUT IT'LL BE OUR SECRET... YOU HAVE TO PROMISE NEVER TO TELL ANYONE!
I PROMISE!


HARRISON!
SHIT!... YOUR MOM!... SHE'S MAD AGAIN BECAUSE WE'RE PLAYING TOGETHER!


I SEARCHED FOR TWO HOURS, HARRISON!... I WAS WORRIED SICK!... YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT YOU WALKING AROUND ALONE WITHOUT A BODYGUARD!... HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO REPEAT IT?!


YOU DISOBEYED ME AGAIN, AND ALL TO COME AND PLAY WITH THIS TROUBLEMAKER!... I FORBADE YOU TO SEE HER!

SINCE YOU CAN'T BE GOOD, I'VE DECIDED TO CUT OUR VACATION SHORT!... WE'RE RETURNING TO GOLDEN CITY!... COME ALONG, THE PLANE IS WAITING!

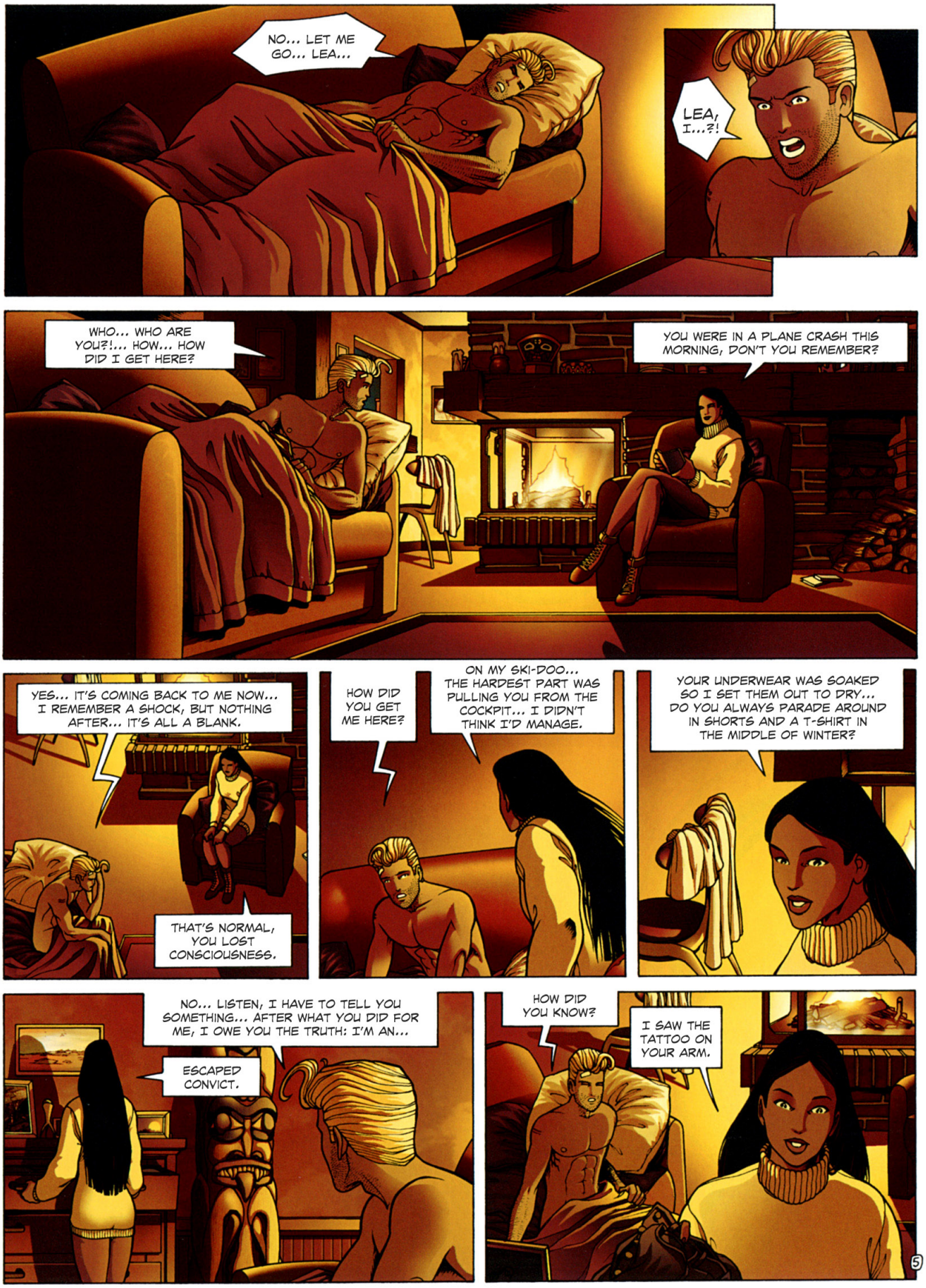

NO!... I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO GOLDEN CITY!... I WANT TO STAY HERE, WITH LEA!... FOREVER!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?!... GRIFFITH, BRING HIM ABOARD IMMEDIATELY!

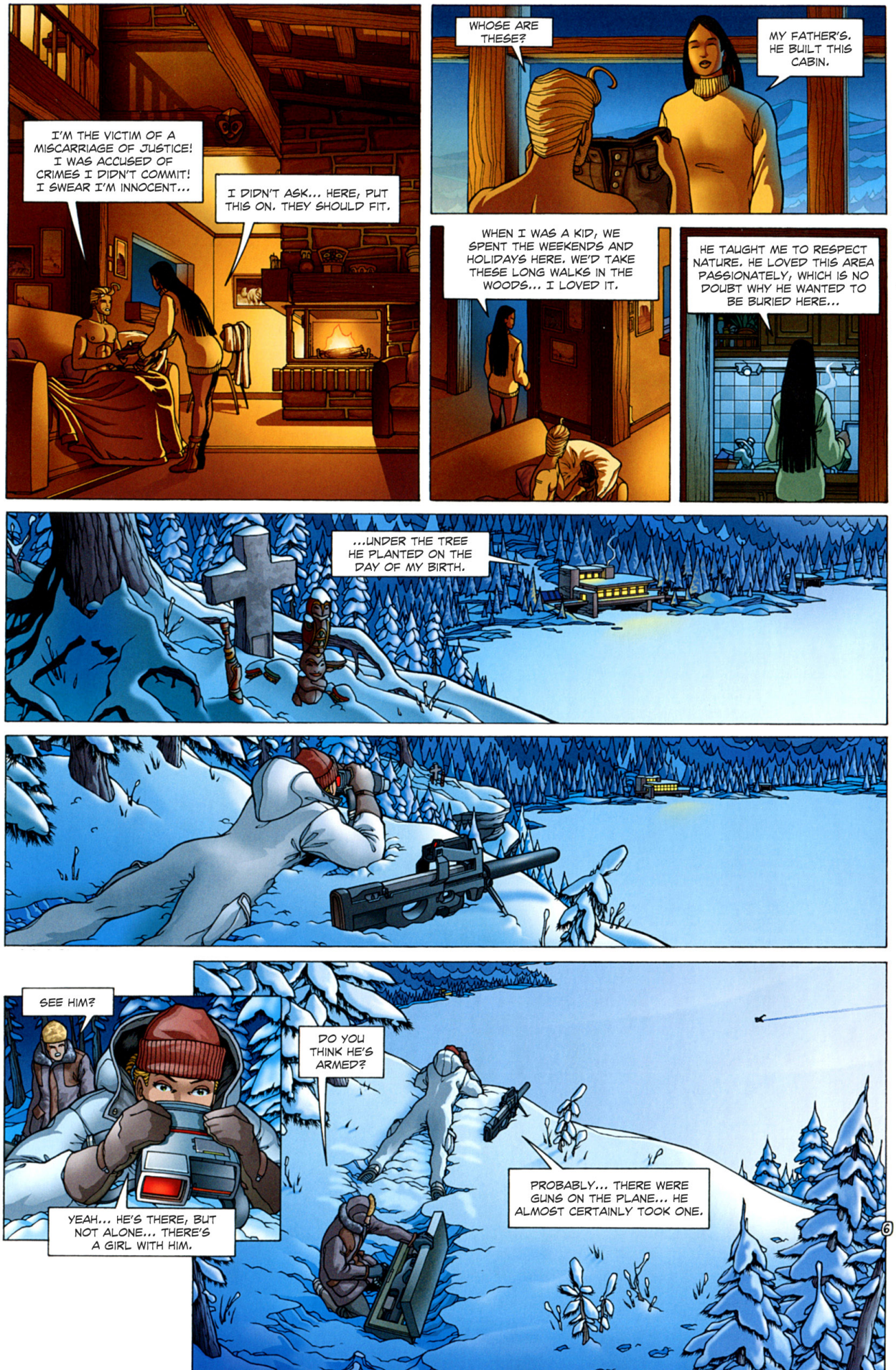
NOOOO!

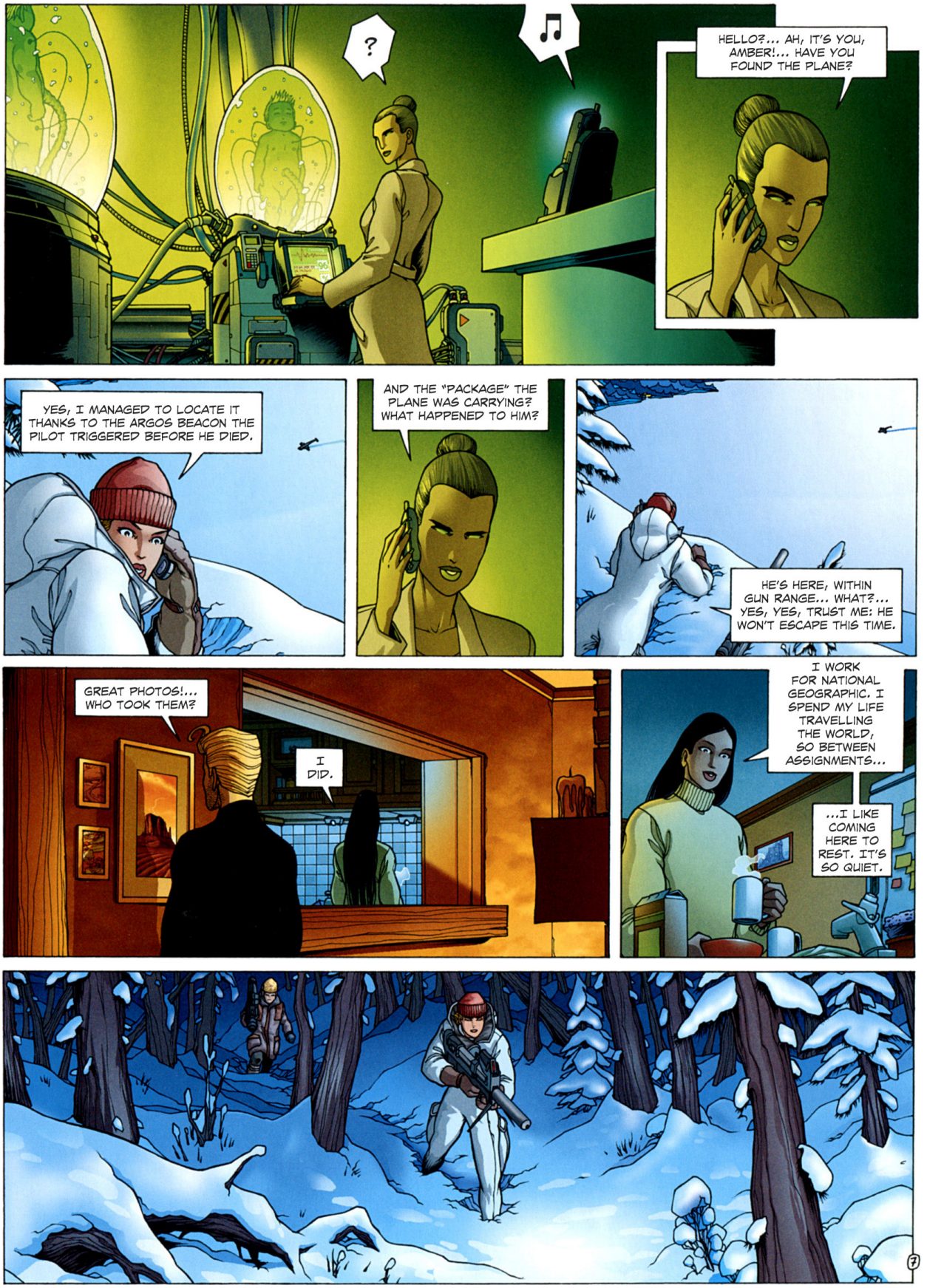
LET ME GO!... I WANT TO STAY WITH LEA!

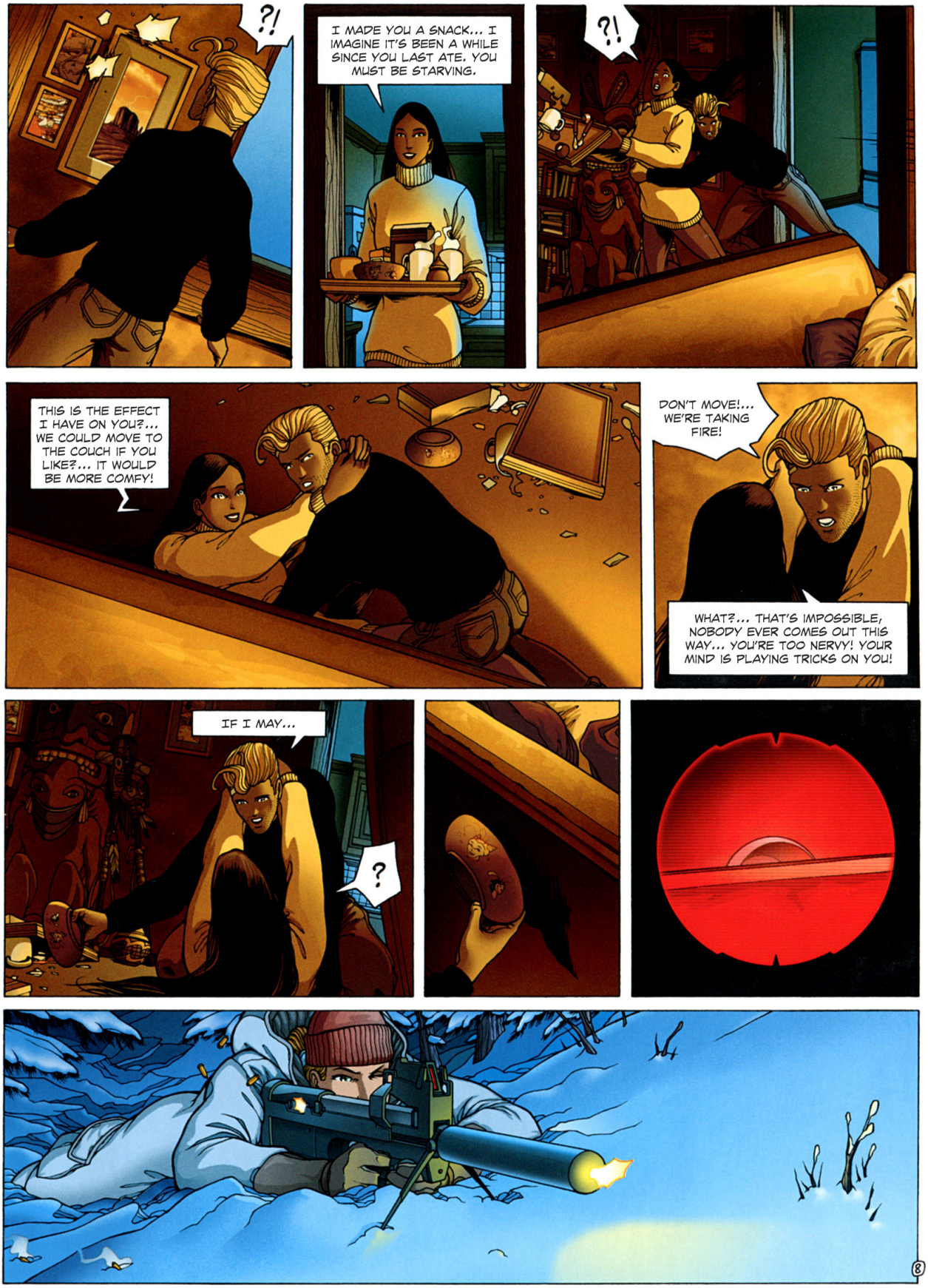
BYE, HARRISON!... DON'T FORGET OUR SECRET!

LEA!... LEA!


NO... LET ME GO... LEA...
LEA, I...?!
WHO... WHO ARE YOU?!... HOW... HOW DID I GET HERE?
YOU WERE IN A PLANE CRASH THIS MORNING, DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
YES... IT'S COMING BACK TO ME NOW... I REMEMBER A SHOCK, BUT NOTHING AFTER... IT'S ALL A BLANK.
THAT'S NORMAL, YOU LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.
HOW DID YOU GET ME HERE?
ON MY SKI-DOO... THE HARDEST PART WAS PULLING YOU FROM THE COCKPIT... I DIDN'T THINK I'D MANAGE.
YOUR UNDERWEAR WAS SOAKED SO I SET THEM OUT TO DRY... DO YOU ALWAYS PARADE AROUND IN SHORTS AND A T-SHIRT IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER?
NO... LISTEN, I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING... AFTER WHAT YOU DID FOR ME, I OWE YOU THE TRUTH: I'M AN...
ESCAPED CONVICT.
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
I SAW THE TATTOO ON YOUR ARM.


I'M THE VICTIM OF A MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE! I WAS ACCUSED OF CRIMES I DIDN'T COMMIT! I SWEAR I'M INNOCENT...
I DIDN'T ASK... HERE, PUT THIS ON. THEY SHOULD FIT.
WHOSE ARE THESE?
MY FATHER'S. HE BUILT THIS CABIN.
WHEN I WAS A KID, WE SPENT THE WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS HERE. WE'D TAKE THESE LONG WALKS IN THE WOODS... I LOVED IT.
HE TAUGHT ME TO RESPECT NATURE. HE LOVED THIS AREA PASSIONATELY, WHICH IS NO DOUBT WHY HE WANTED TO BE BURIED HERE...
...UNDER THE TREE HE PLANTED ON THE DAY OF MY BIRTH.
SEE HIM?
YEAH... HE'S THERE, BUT NOT ALONE... THERE'S A GIRL WITH HIM.
DO YOU THINK HE'S ARMED?
PROBABLY... THERE WERE GUNS ON THE PLANE... HE ALMOST CERTAINLY TOOK ONE.


?
HELLO?... AH, IT'S YOU, AMBER!... HAVE YOU FOUND THE PLANE?
YES, I MANAGED TO LOCATE IT THANKS TO THE ARGOS BEACON THE PILOT TRIGGERED BEFORE HE DIED.
AND THE "PACKAGE" THE PLANE WAS CARRYING? WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
HE'S HERE, WITHIN GUN RANGE... WHAT?... YES, YES, TRUST ME: HE WON'T ESCAPE THIS TIME.
GREAT PHOTOS!... WHO TOOK THEM?
I DID.
I WORK FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC. I SPEND MY LIFE TRAVELLING THE WORLD, SO BETWEEN ASSIGNMENTS...
...I LIKE COMING HERE TO REST. IT'S SO QUIET.


?!
I MADE YOU A SNACK... I IMAGINE IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU LAST ATE. YOU MUST BE STARVING.
?!
THIS IS THE EFFECT I HAVE ON YOU?... WE COULD MOVE TO THE COUCH IF YOU LIKE?... IT WOULD BE MORE COMFY!
DON'T MOVE!... WE'RE TAKING FIRE!
WHAT?... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, NOBODY EVER COMES OUT THIS WAY... YOU'RE TOO NERVY! YOUR MIND IS PLAYING TRICKS ON YOU!
IF I MAY...
?

MY BOWL!... IT'S BEEN MY FAVORITE SINCE I WAS LITTLE!
SORRY.
I CAN'T HIT HIM FROM THIS DISTANCE... HE'S HIDING BEHIND THE FURNITURE.
DON'T MOVE, SWEETHEART, I'LL FLUSH THE PIGEONS FROM THEIR NEST!... THEN YOU CAN JUST SHOOT 'EM LIKE SKEET!
COULD IT BE THE POLICE?
MAYBE. AFTER MY ESCAPE, THEY'LL HAVE EVERY COP IN THE REGION ON MY TRAIL.
DOES THIS HAVE AN INFRARED MODE?
YES... I USE IT TO PHOTOGRAPH ANIMALS AT NIGHT.
GREAT!
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HER?! THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE!... HOW DID SHE FIND ME?
WHO IS IT?... SOMEONE YOU KNOW?
YEAH!... THAT CHARMING LADY IS A PROFESSIONAL ASSASSIN!... SHE'S TRIED TO KILL ME BEFORE, SIX MONTHS AGO DURING MY PRISON TRANSFER!

RUN!
?!
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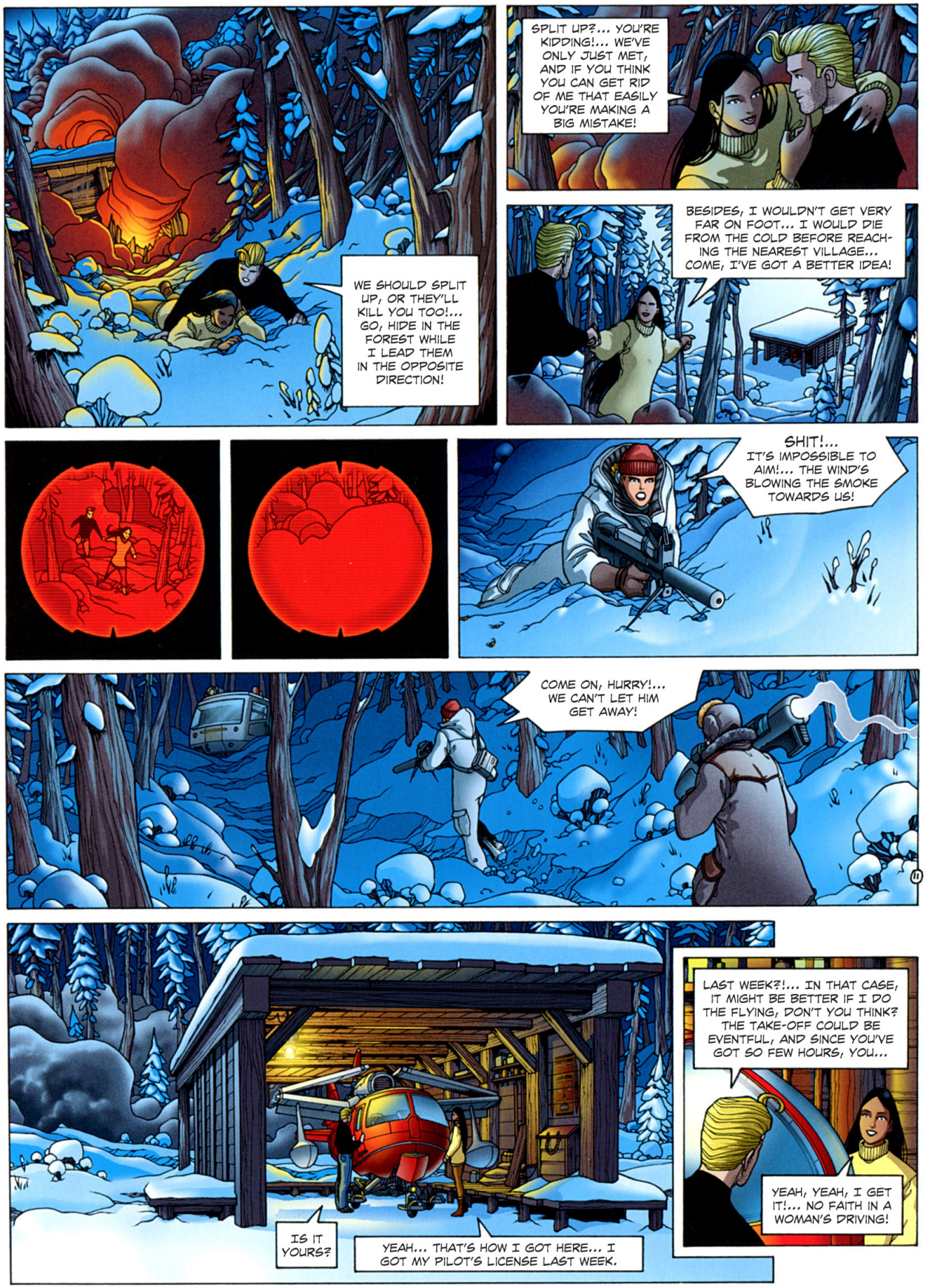
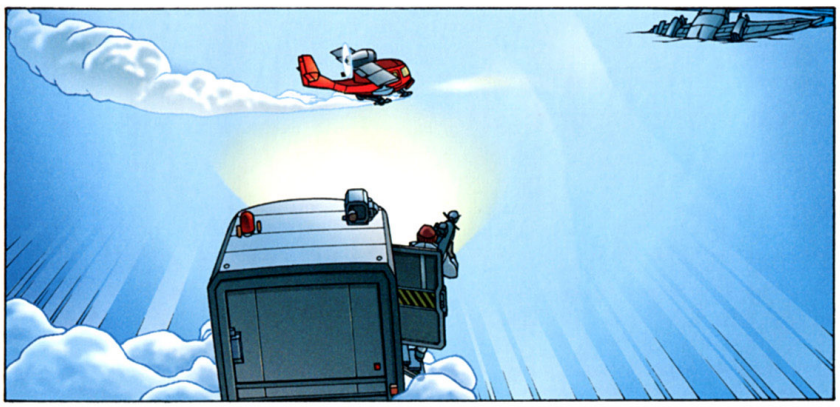
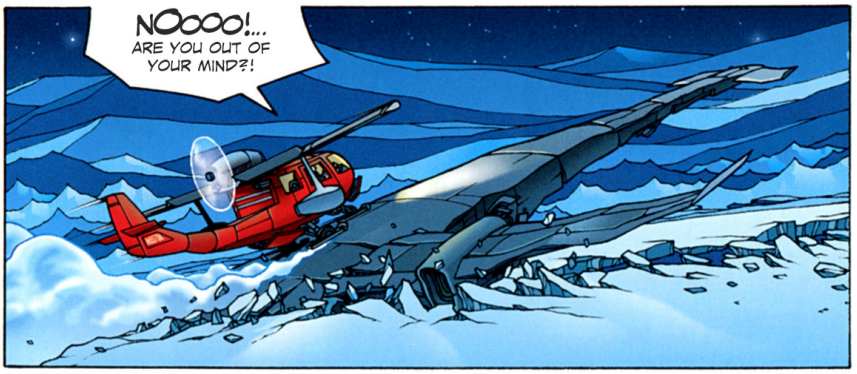
10


WE SHOULD SPLIT UP, OR THEY'LL KILL YOU TOO!... GO, HIDE IN THE FOREST WHILE I LEAD THEM IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION!
SPLIT UP?... YOU'RE KIDDING!... WE'VE ONLY JUST MET, AND IF YOU THINK YOU CAN GET RID OF ME THAT EASILY YOU'RE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE!
BESIDES, I WOULDN'T GET VERY FAR ON FOOT... I WOULD DIE FROM THE COLD BEFORE REACHING THE NEAREST VILLAGE... COME, I'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA!
SHIT!... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO AIM!... THE WIND'S BLOWING THE SMOKE TOWARDS US!
COME ON, HURRY!... WE CAN'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
11
IS IT YOURS?
YEAH... THAT'S HOW I GOT HERE... I GOT MY PILOT'S LICENSE LAST WEEK.
LAST WEEK?!... IN THAT CASE, IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF I DO THE FLYING, DON'T YOU THINK? THE TAKE-OFF COULD BE EVENTFUL, AND SINCE YOU'VE GOT SO FEW HOURS, YOU...
YEAH, YEAH, I GET IT!... NO FAITH IN A WOMAN'S DRIVING!

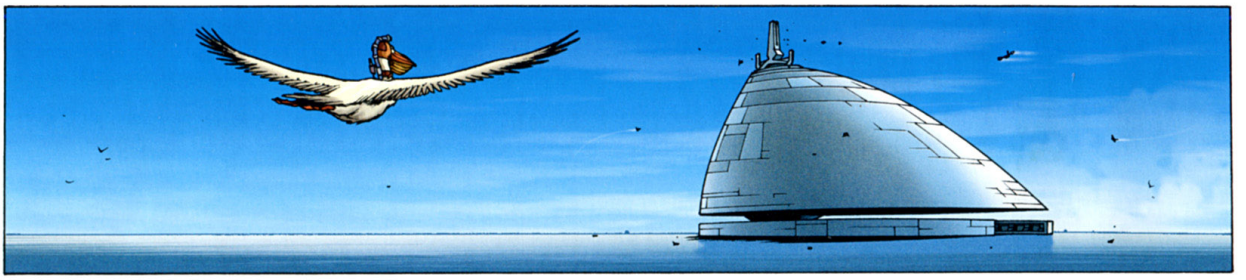
?!
N6570K
GO AHEAD, MY BEAUTY! BLAST 'EM!

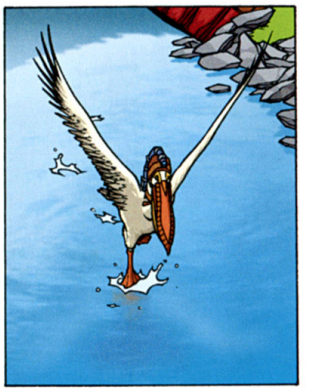


THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ROOM TO TAKE-OFF!... IT'S OVER!
IT ISN'T!

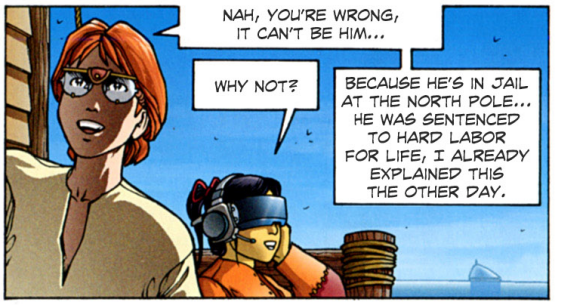

NOOOO!... ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!

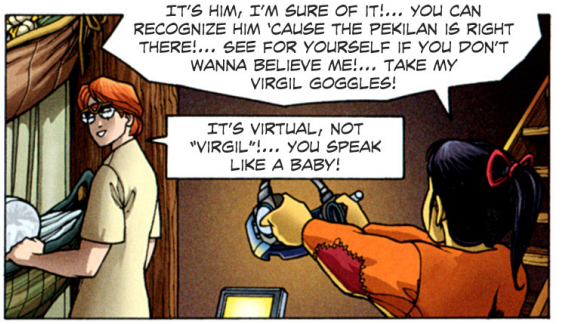
WELL, SHIT... HE GOT AWAY AGAIN!



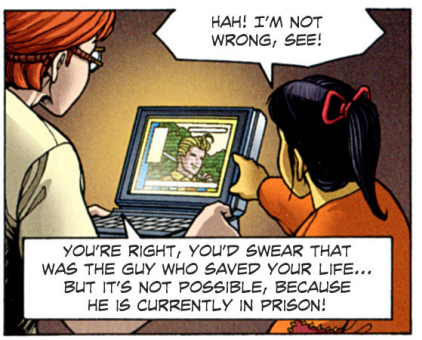


APPLE!... COME AND SEE, QUICK!... IT'S THAT MAN!
WHAT MAN?
THE ONE WHO SAVED MY LIFE!

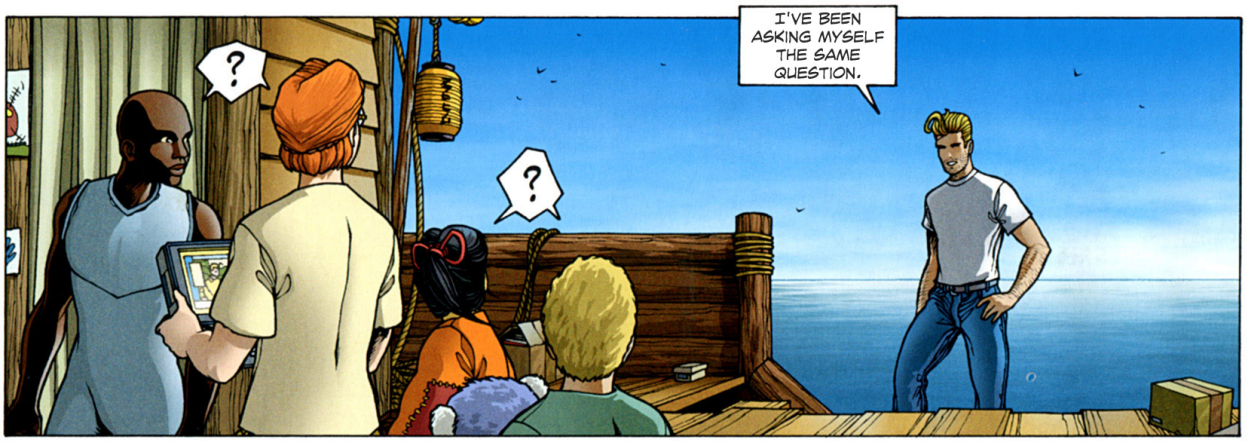

NAH, YOU'RE WRONG, IT CAN'T BE HIM...
WHY NOT?
BECAUSE HE'S IN JAIL AT THE NORTH POLE... HE WAS SENTENCED TO HARD LABOR FOR LIFE, I ALREADY EXPLAINED THIS THE OTHER DAY.

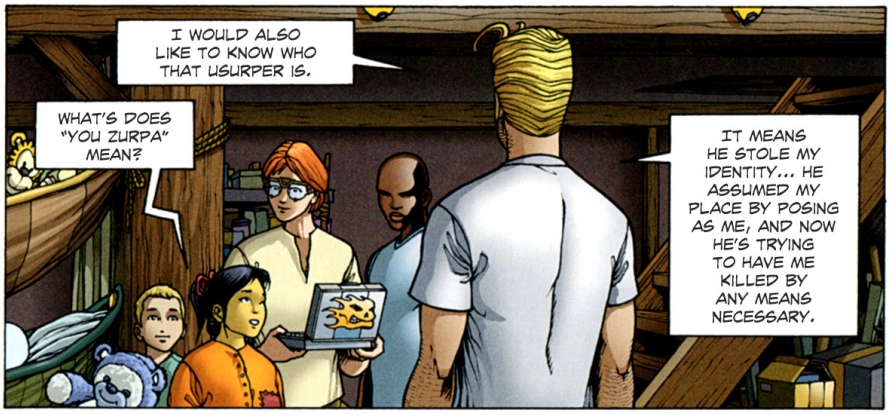

IT'S HIM, I'M SURE OF IT!... YOU CAN RECOGNIZE HIM 'CAUSE THE PEKILAN IS RIGHT THERE!... SEE FOR YOURSELF IF YOU DON'T WANNA BELIEVE ME!... TAKE MY VIRGIL GOGGLES!
IT'S VIRTUAL, NOT "VIRGIL"!... YOU SPEAK LIKE A BABY!

I HATE IT WHEN YOU SAY THAT TO ME!... D'YA WANT 'EM, OR NOT?
NO NEED, I CAN SEE THE IMAGES ON MY COMPUTER.

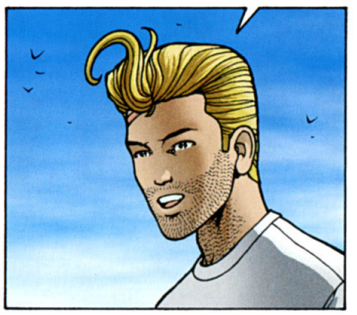

HAH! I'M NOT WRONG, SEE!
YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU'D SWEAR THAT WAS THE GUY WHO SAVED YOUR LIFE... BUT IT'S NOT POSSIBLE, BECAUSE HE IS CURRENTLY IN PRISON!

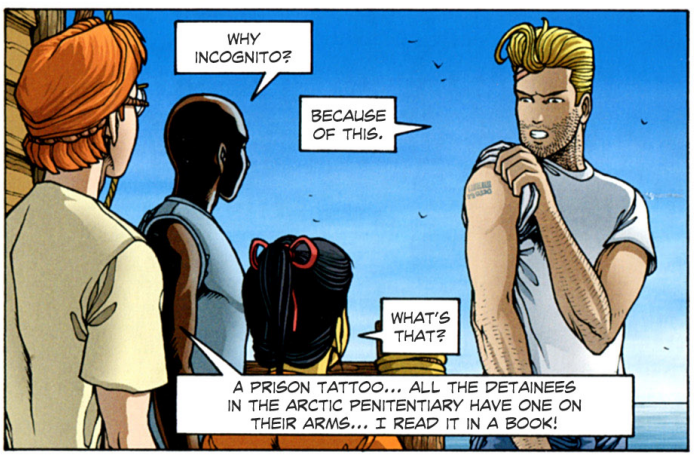
IF THAT'S NOT HIM, THEN WHO IS HE?

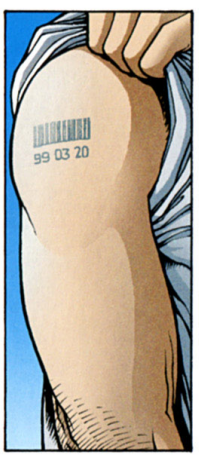



I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO KNOW WHO THAT USURPER IS.
WHAT'S DOES "YOU ZURPA" MEAN?
IT MEANS HE STOLE MY IDENTITY... HE ASSUMED MY PLACE BY POSING AS ME, AND NOW HE'S TRYING TO HAVE ME KILLED BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

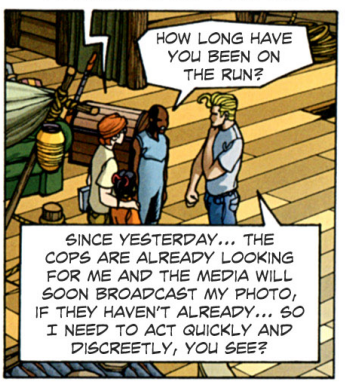
I MAY STILL HAVE A CHANCE TO SAVE MY SKIN IF I CAN PROVE THAT HE'S AN IMPOSTER... BUT FOR THAT I'LL NEED TO GET TO GOLDEN CITY QUICKLY AND INCOGNITO.

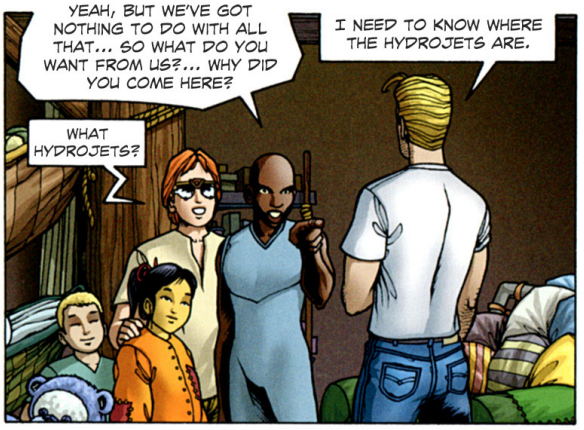


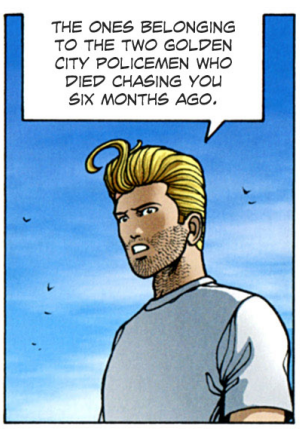

WHY INCOGNITO?
BECAUSE OF THIS.
WHAT'S THAT?
A PRISON TATTOO... ALL THE DETAINEES IN THE ARCTIC PENITENTIARY HAVE ONE ON THEIR ARMS... I READ IT IN A BOOK!

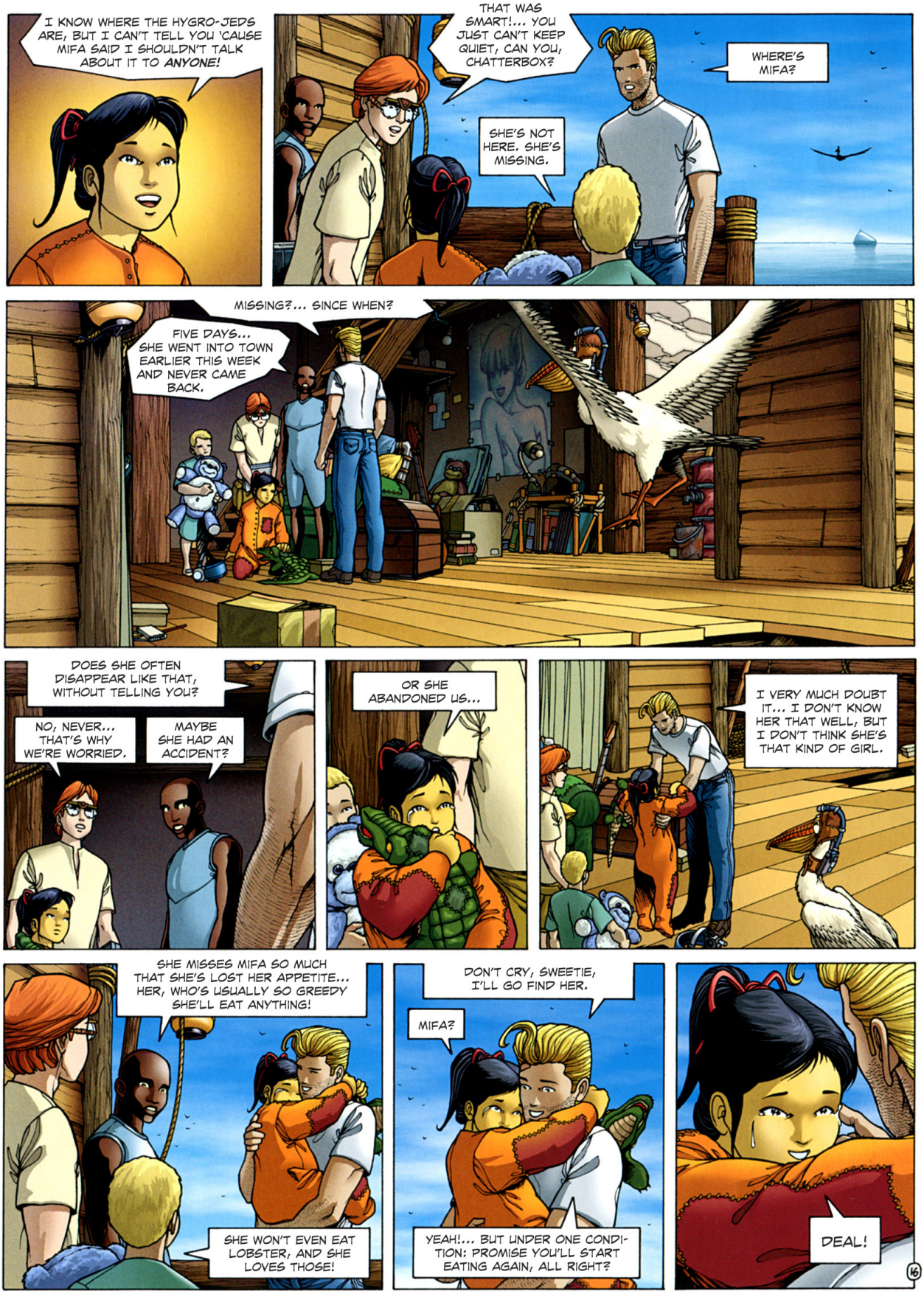


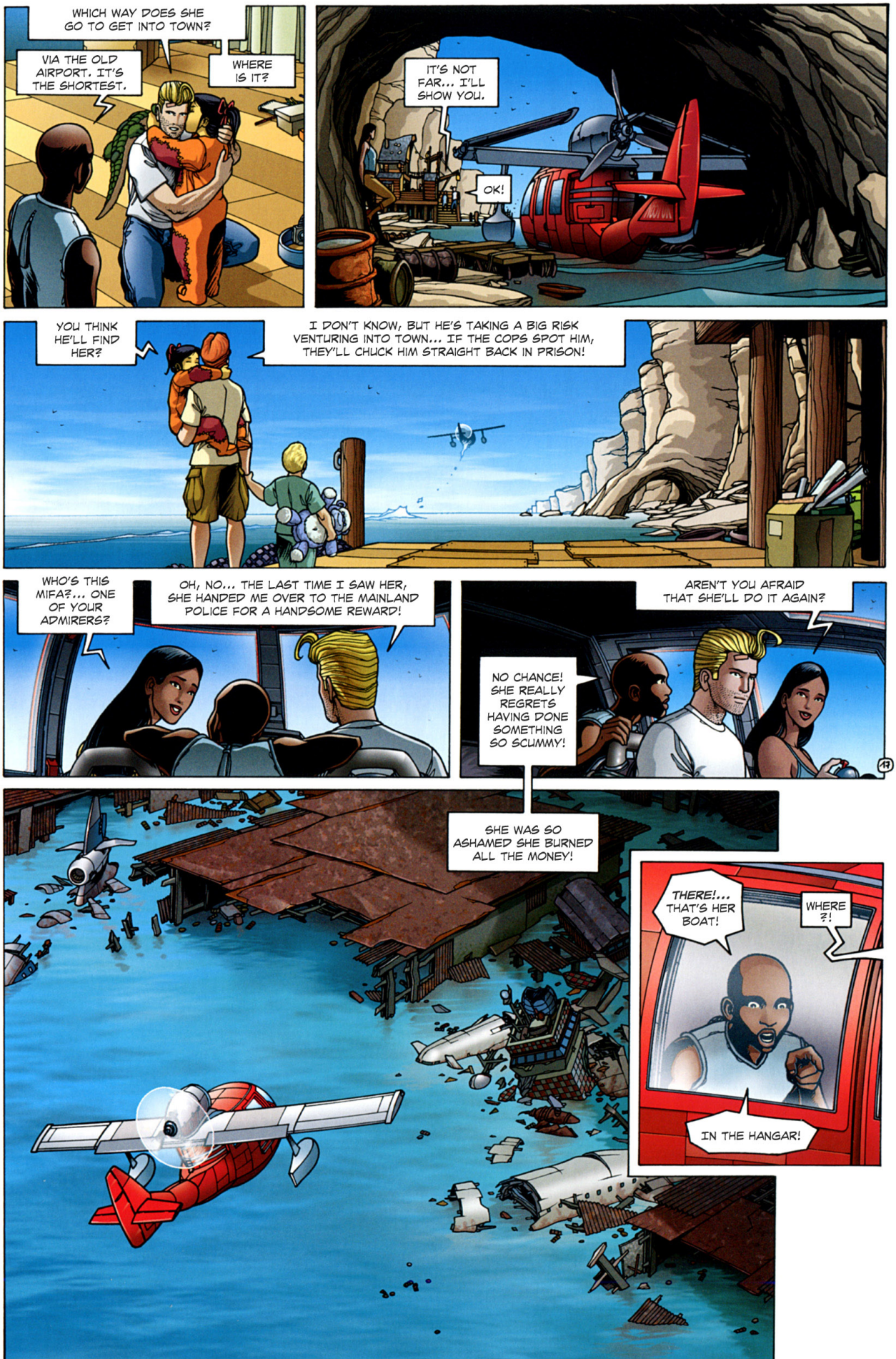
IT'S INCREDIBLE THAT YOU ESCAPED FROM THERE!... NO ONE HAS EVER MANAGED IT BEFORE!

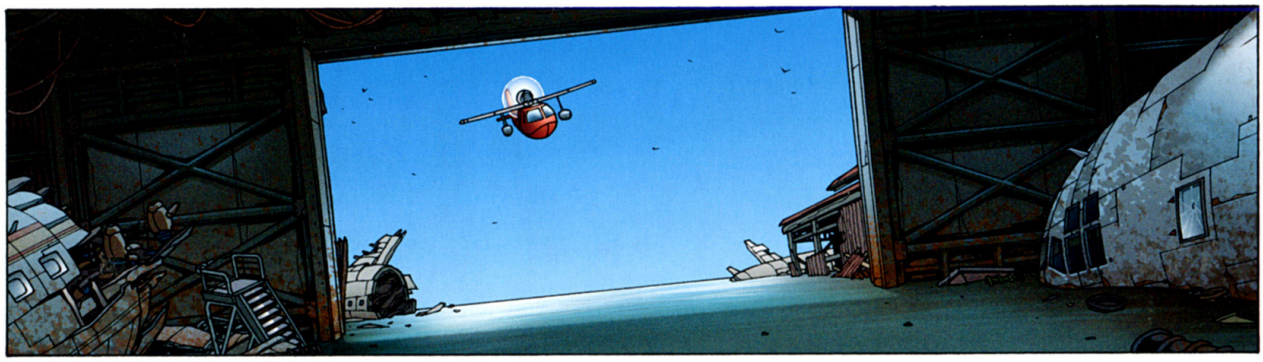

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ON THE RUN?
SINCE YESTERDAY... THE COPS ARE ALREADY LOOKING FOR ME AND THE MEDIA WILL SOON BROADCAST MY PHOTO, IF THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY... SO I NEED TO ACT QUICKLY AND DISCREETLY, YOU SEE?

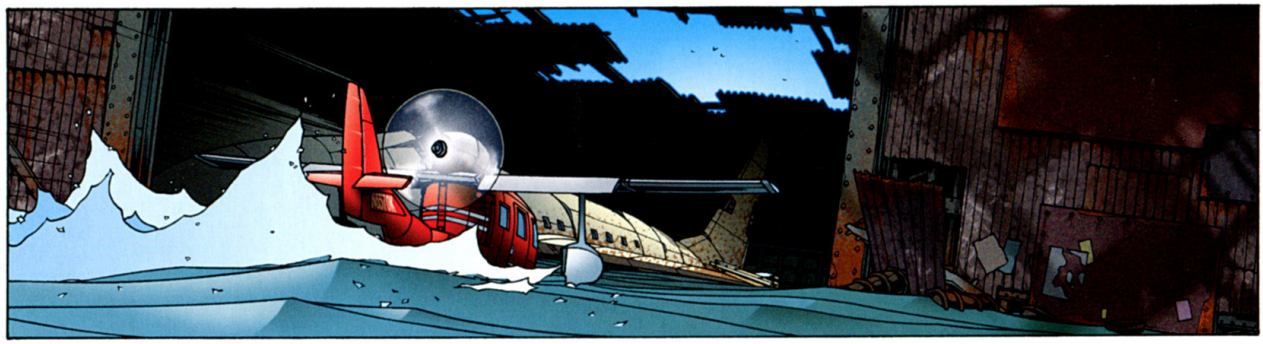

YEAH, BUT WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ALL THAT... SO WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?... WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
I NEED TO KNOW WHERE THE HYDROJETS ARE.
WHAT HYDROJETS?

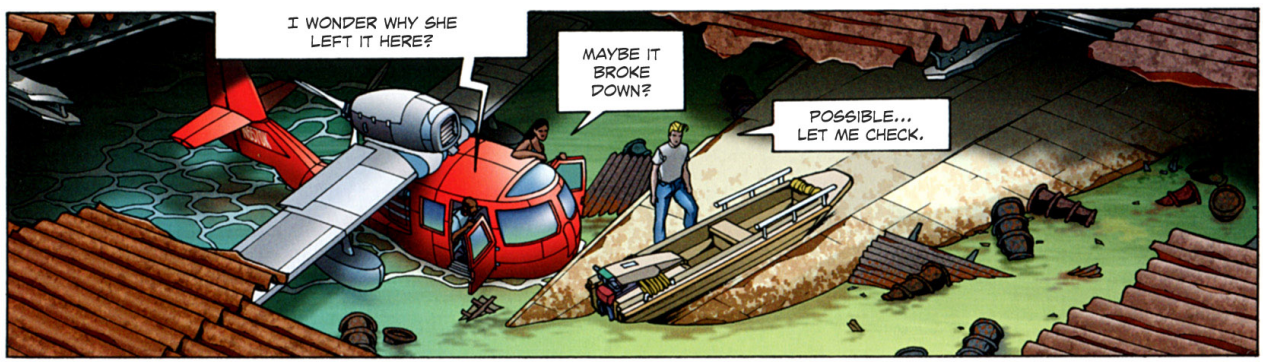


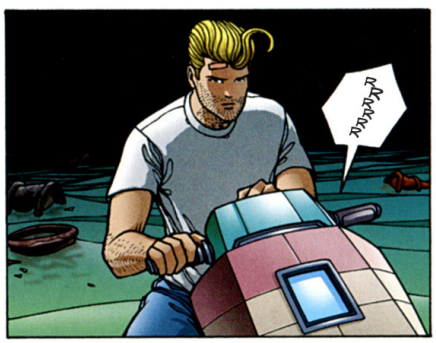

I KNOW WHERE THE HYGRO-JEDS ARE, BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU 'CAUSE MIFA SAID I SHOULDN'T TALK ABOUT IT TO ANYONE!
THAT WAS SMART!... YOU JUST CAN'T KEEP QUIET, CAN YOU, CHATTERBOX?
WHERE'S MIFA?
SHE'S NOT HERE. SHE'S MISSING.
MISSING?... SINCE WHEN?
FIVE DAYS... SHE WENT INTO TOWN EARLIER THIS WEEK AND NEVER CAME BACK.
DOES SHE OFTEN DISAPPEAR LIKE THAT, WITHOUT TELLING YOU?
NO, NEVER... THAT'S WHY WE'RE WORRIED.
MAYBE SHE HAD AN ACCIDENT?
OR SHE ABANDONED US...
I VERY MUCH DOUBT IT... I DON'T KNOW HER THAT WELL, BUT I DON'T THINK SHE'S THAT KIND OF GIRL.
SHE MISSES MIFA SO MUCH THAT SHE'S LOST HER APPETITE... HER, WHO'S USUALLY SO GREEDY SHE'LL EAT ANYTHING!
SHE WON'T EVEN EAT LOBSTER, AND SHE LOVES THOSE!
DON'T CRY, SWEETIE, I'LL GO FIND HER.
MIFA?
YEAH!... BUT UNDER ONE CONDITION: PROMISE YOU'LL START EATING AGAIN, ALL RIGHT?
DEAL!
16

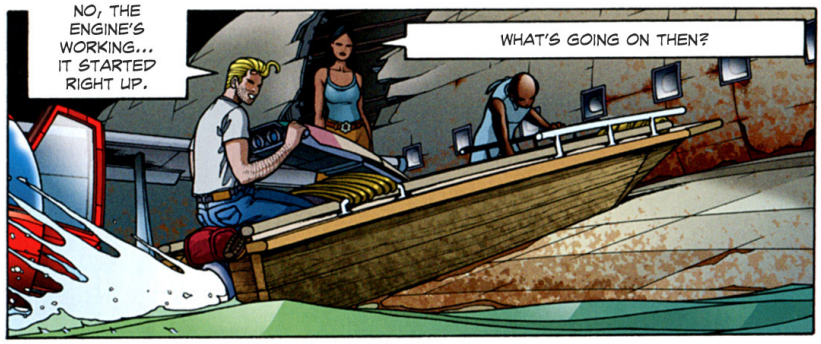

WHICH WAY DOES SHE GO TO GET INTO TOWN?
VIA THE OLD AIRPORT. IT'S THE SHORTEST.
WHERE IS IT?
IT'S NOT FAR... I'LL SHOW YOU.
OK!
YOU THINK HE'LL FIND HER?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT HE'S TAKING A BIG RISK VENTURING INTO TOWN... IF THE COPS SPOT HIM, THEY'LL CHUCK HIM STRAIGHT BACK IN PRISON!
WHO'S THIS MIFA?... ONE OF YOUR ADMIRERS?
OH, NO... THE LAST TIME I SAW HER, SHE HANDED ME OVER TO THE MAINLAND POLICE FOR A HANDSOME REWARD!
AREN'T YOU AFRAID THAT SHE'LL DO IT AGAIN?
NO CHANCE! SHE REALLY REGRETS HAVING DONE SOMETHING SO SCUMMY!
SHE WAS SO ASHAMED SHE BURNED ALL THE MONEY!
THERE!... THAT'S HER BOAT!
WHERE?!
IN THE HANGAR!

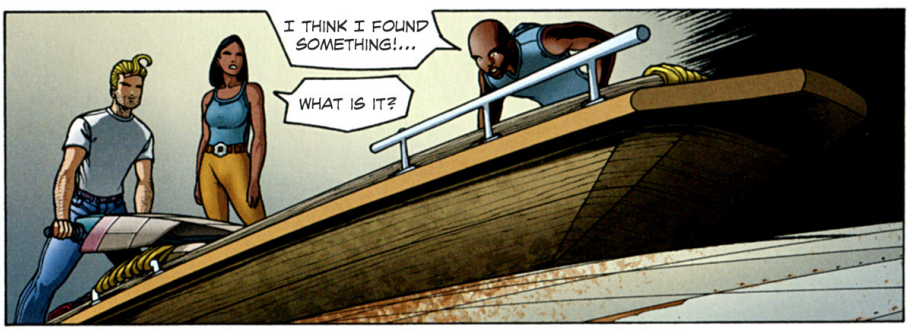





I WONDER WHY SHE LEFT IT HERE?
MAYBE IT BROKE DOWN?
POSSIBLE... LET ME CHECK.


RRRRRR


NO, THE ENGINE'S WORKING... IT STARTED RIGHT UP.
WHAT'S GOING ON THEN?

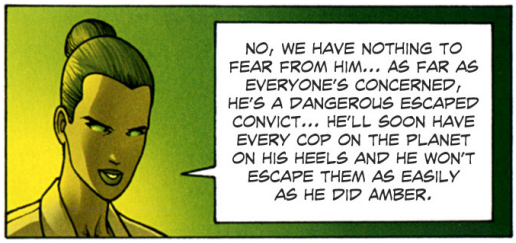

I THINK I FOUND SOMETHING!...
WHAT IS IT?

THE JACKAL'S KNIFE!

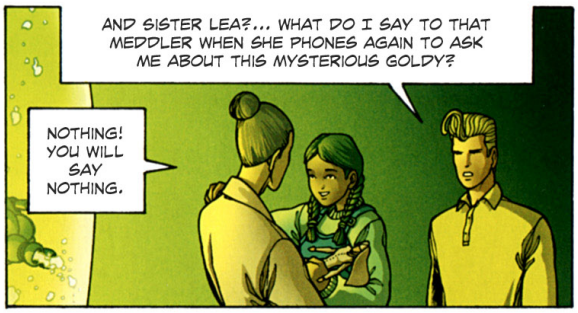
JESSICA ISN'T WITH YOU?
NO, SHE STAYED BEHIND AT THE CLUBHOUSE TO GOSSIP WITH HER FRIENDS.

SO MUCH THE BETTER... I'M GLAD SHE'S NOT PARTY TO THIS CONVERSATION BECAUSE I HAVE BAD NEWS FOR YOU: AMBER JUST CALLED. THE STUPID BITCH LOST THE "PACKAGE".
WHEN?

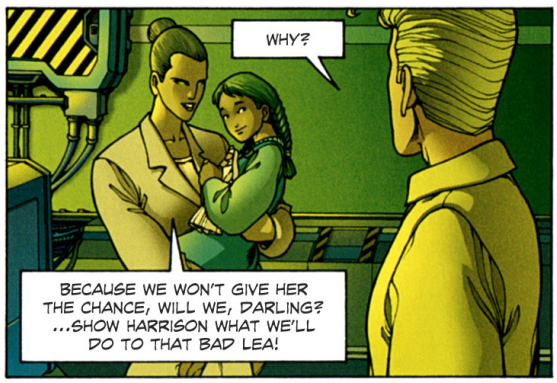
LAST NIGHT. HE SLIPPED OUT FROM UNDER HER NOSE JUST AS SHE WAS ABOUT TO GET HER HANDS ON HIM... HE FLED ABOARD A SEAPLANE.
WE NEVER SHOULD HAVE SPRUNG HIM FROM PRISON! ...NOW THAT HE'S FREE HE REPRESENTS A CONSTANT THREAT!... HE COULD REAPPEAR AT ANY TIME TO THWART OUR PLANS!

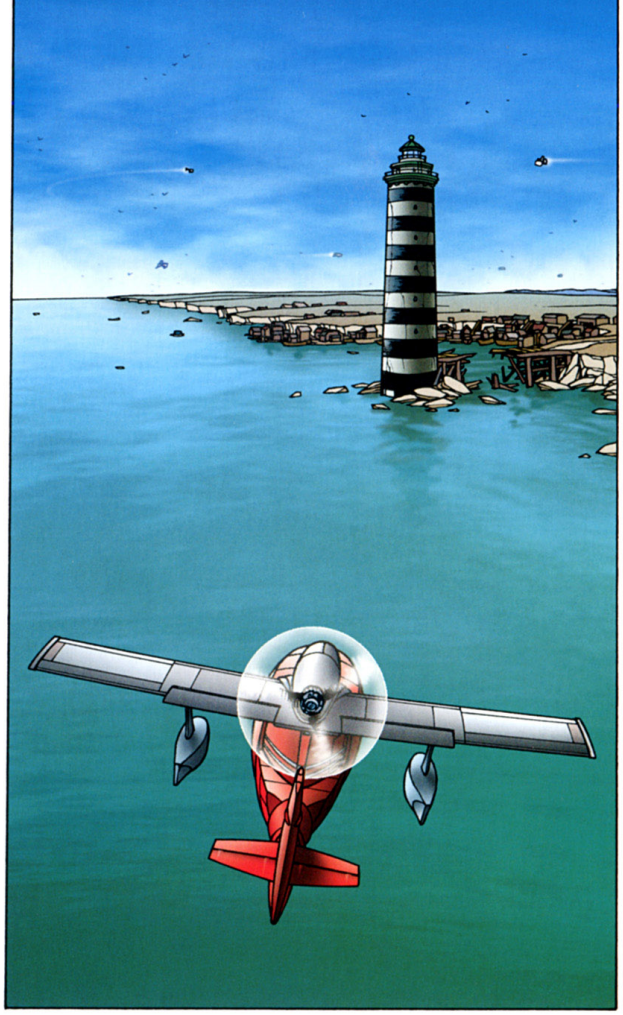

NO, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM HIM... AS FAR AS EVERYONE'S CONCERNED, HE'S A DANGEROUS ESCAPED CONVICT... HE'LL SOON HAVE EVERY COP ON THE PLANET ON HIS HEELS AND HE WON'T ESCAPE THEM AS EASILY AS HE DID AMBER.

THEY'LL TRACK HIM DOWN SOONER OR LATER AND SHOOT HIM ON THE SPOT... THAT'S WHAT THEY ALWAYS DO WITH ESCAPED PRISONERS.
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.

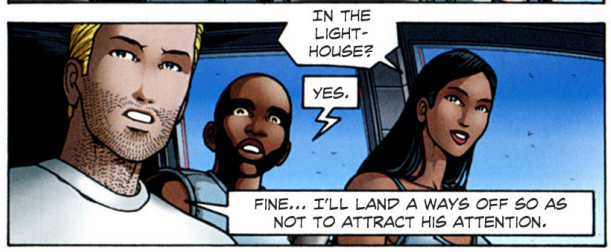

AND SISTER LEA?... WHAT DO I SAY TO THAT MEDDLER WHEN SHE PHONES AGAIN TO ASK ME ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS GOLDY?
NOTHING! YOU WILL SAY NOTHING.

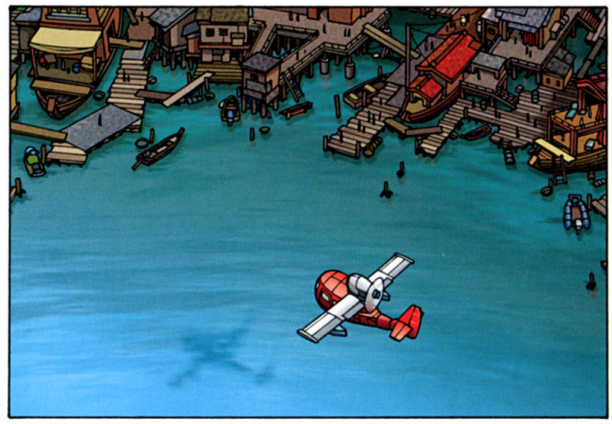
THAT WILL ONLY FUEL HER DOUBTS ABOUT ME. SHE GETS A LOT OF MEDIA ATTENTION, DON'T FORGET... IF SHE SUSPECTS SOMETHING AND TALKS TO THE PRESS WE'RE FINISHED!
SHE WON'T TALK.


WHY?
BECAUSE WE WON'T GIVE HER THE CHANCE, WILL WE, DARLING? ...SHOW HARRISON WHAT WE'LL DO TO THAT BAD LEA!



THERE, THAT'S WHERE HE LIVES!


IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE?
YES.
FINE... I'LL LAND A WAYS OFF SO AS NOT TO ATTRACT HIS ATTENTION.



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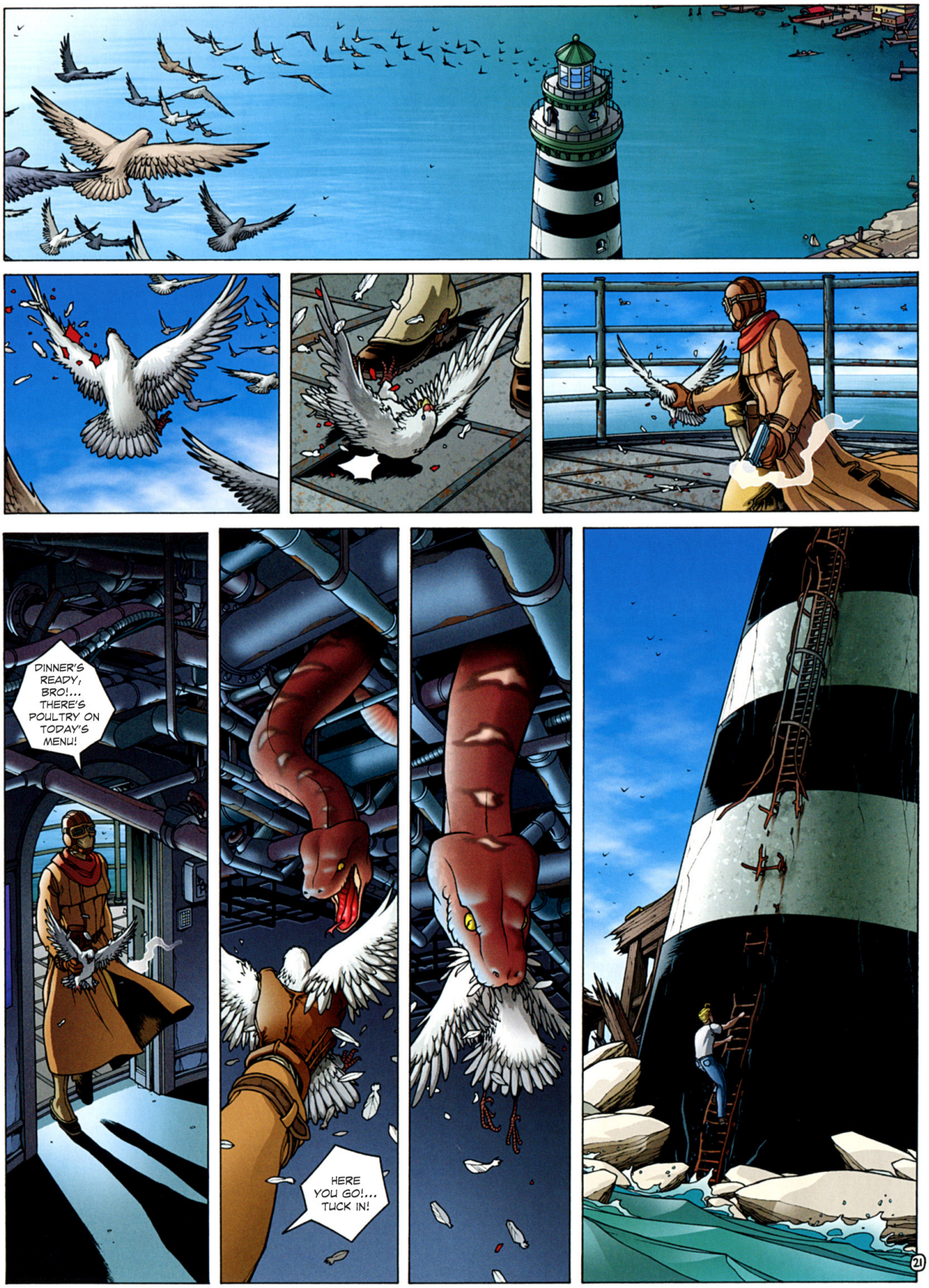
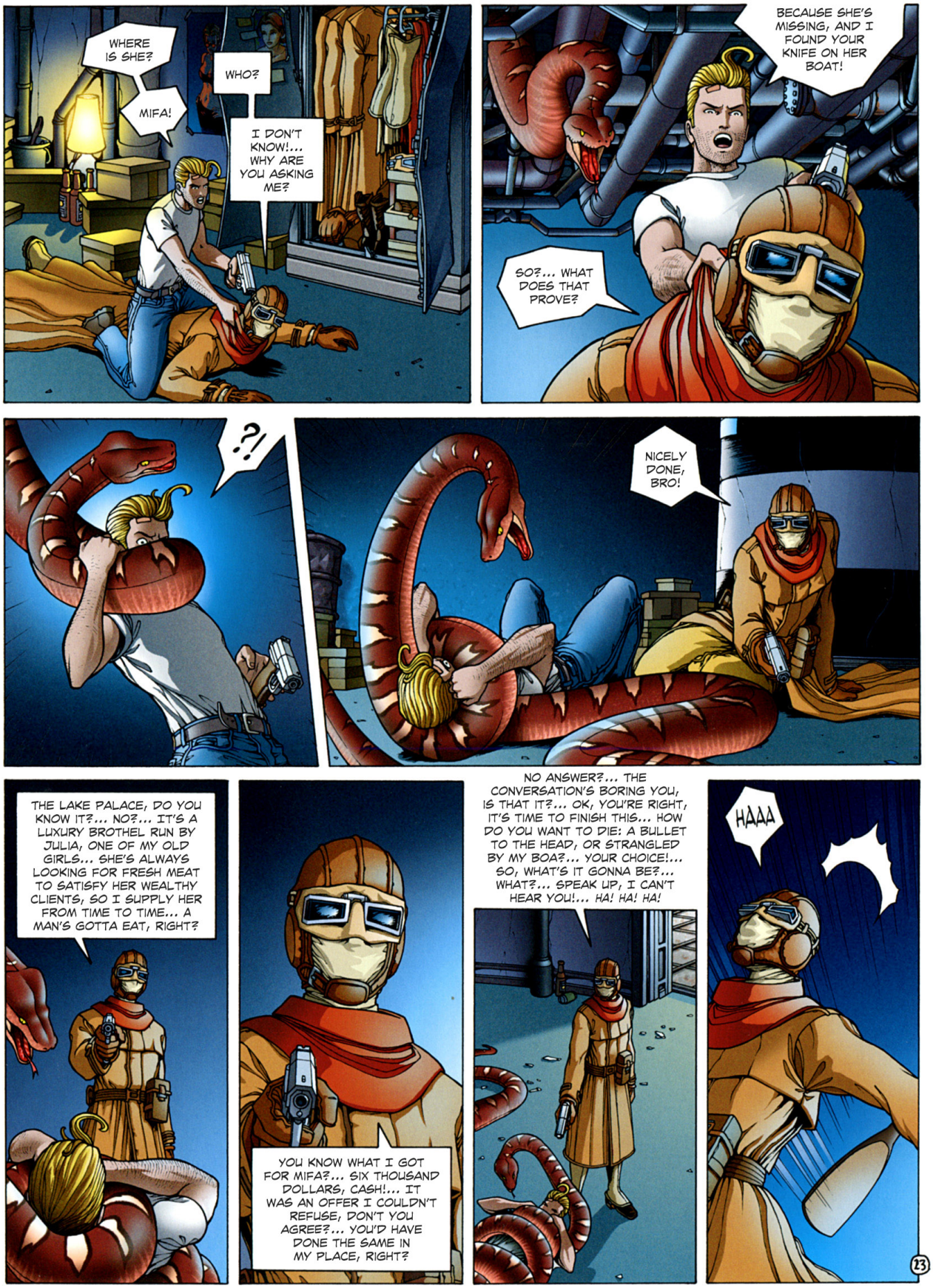
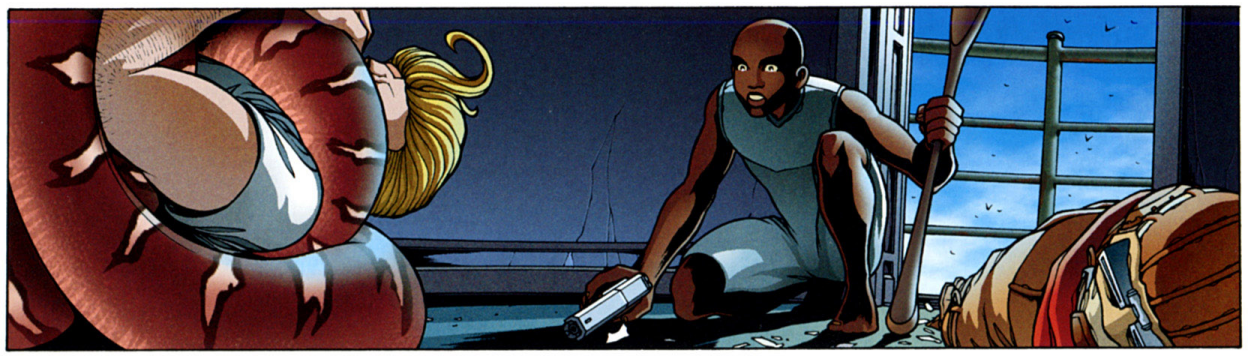
WAIT!... I'M COMING WITH YOU!
NO WAY!

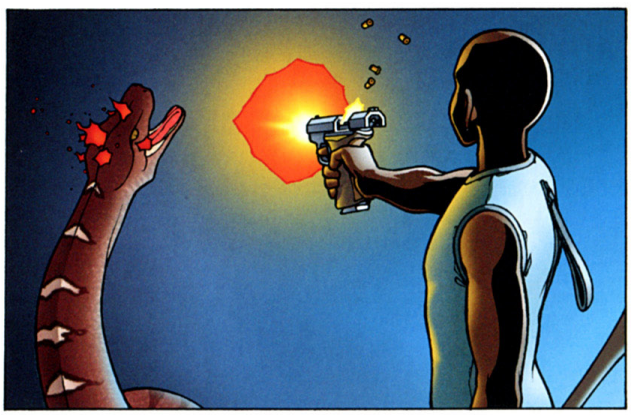
WHY NOT?
BECAUSE, AS I LEARNED THE HARD WAY, THE JACKAL IS QUICK TO SHOOT... I'D RATHER YOU WAIT HERE, WHERE YOU'LL BE SAFE.


DINNER'S READY, BRO!... THERE'S POULTRY ON TODAY'S MENU!
HERE YOU GO!... TUCK IN!

YOU LIKED THAT, HUH?... HA! HA!... I GET IT!... I LIKE MY BIRDS YOUNG AND TENDER TOO!
LIKE MIFA?
?!

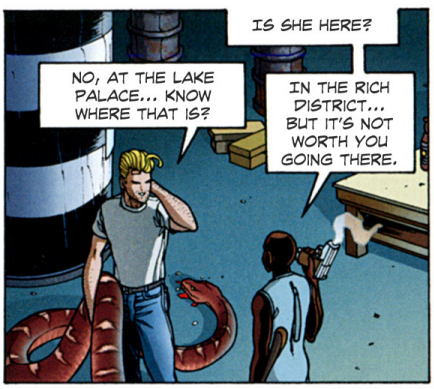

WHERE IS SHE?
MIFA!
WHO?
I DON'T KNOW!... WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?
BECAUSE SHE'S MISSING, AND I FOUND YOUR KNIFE ON HER BOAT!
SO?... WHAT DOES THAT PROVE?
?!
NICELY DONE, BRO!
THE LAKE PALACE, DO YOU KNOW IT?... NO?... IT'S A LUXURY BROTHEL RUN BY JULIA, ONE OF MY OLD GIRLS... SHE'S ALWAYS LOOKING FOR FRESH MEAT TO SATISFY HER WEALTHY CLIENTS, SO I SUPPLY HER FROM TIME TO TIME... A MAN'S GOTTA EAT, RIGHT?
YOU KNOW WHAT I GOT FOR MIFA?... SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS, CASH!... IT WAS AN OFFER I COULDN'T REFUSE, DON'T YOU AGREE?... YOU'D HAVE DONE THE SAME IN MY PLACE, RIGHT?
NO ANSWER?... THE CONVERSATION'S BORING YOU, IS THAT IT?... OK, YOU'RE RIGHT, IT'S TIME TO FINISH THIS... HOW DO YOU WANT TO DIE: A BULLET TO THE HEAD, OR STRANGLED BY MY BOA?... YOUR CHOICE!... SO, WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?... WHAT?... SPEAK UP, I CAN'T HEAR YOU!... HA! HA! HA!
HAAA



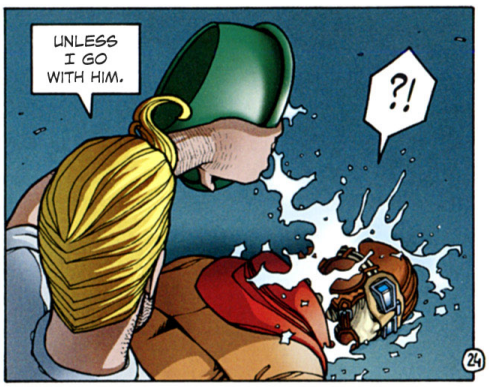


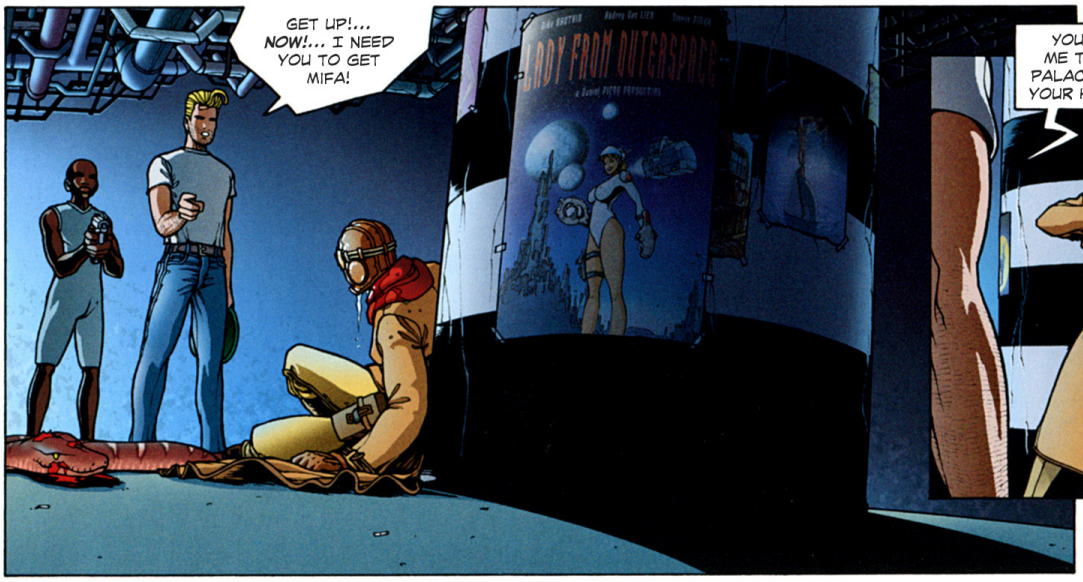
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO WAIT QUIETLY BY THE SEAPLANE!... YOU'RE A HEADSTRONG KID, HUH?

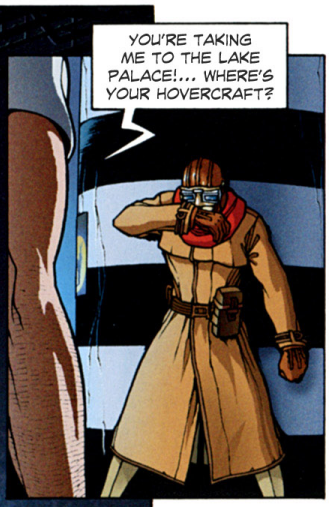
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT MIFA ALWAYS SAYS.


IS SHE HERE?
NO, AT THE LAKE PALACE... KNOW WHERE THAT IS?
IN THE RICH DISTRICT... BUT IT'S NOT WORTH YOU GOING THERE.

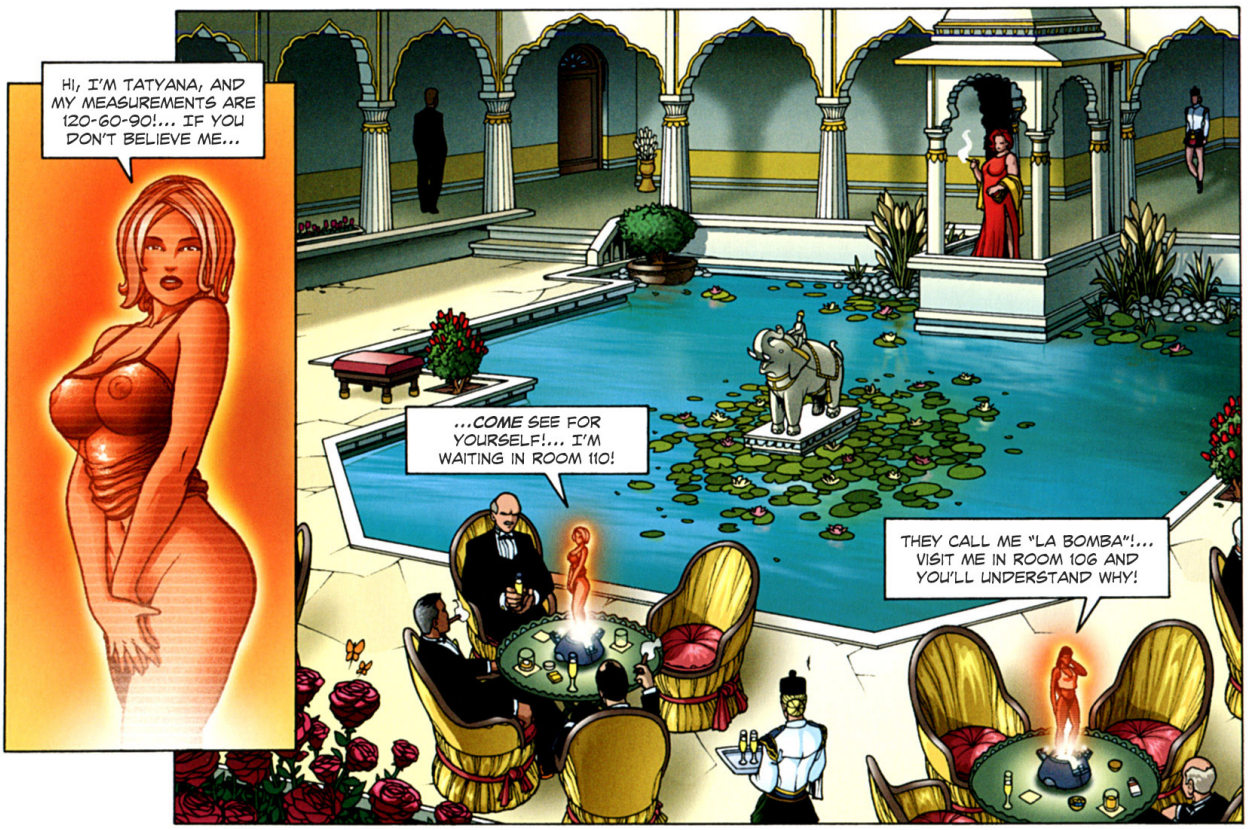
WHY'S THAT?
IT'S A PRIVATE CLUB... YOU NEED A MEMBERSHIP CARD TO GET IN, AND SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, YOU CAN'T.

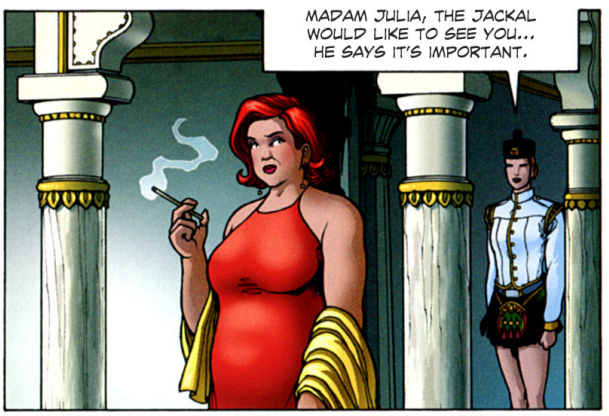

UNLESS I GO WITH HIM.
?!
24

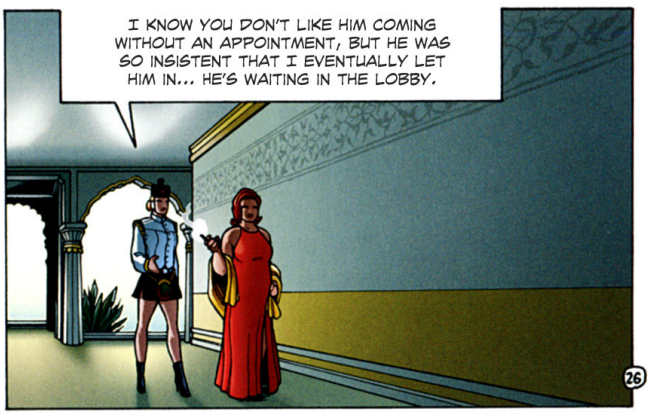

GET UP!... NOW!... I NEED YOU TO GET MIFA!
LADY FROM OUTERSPACE

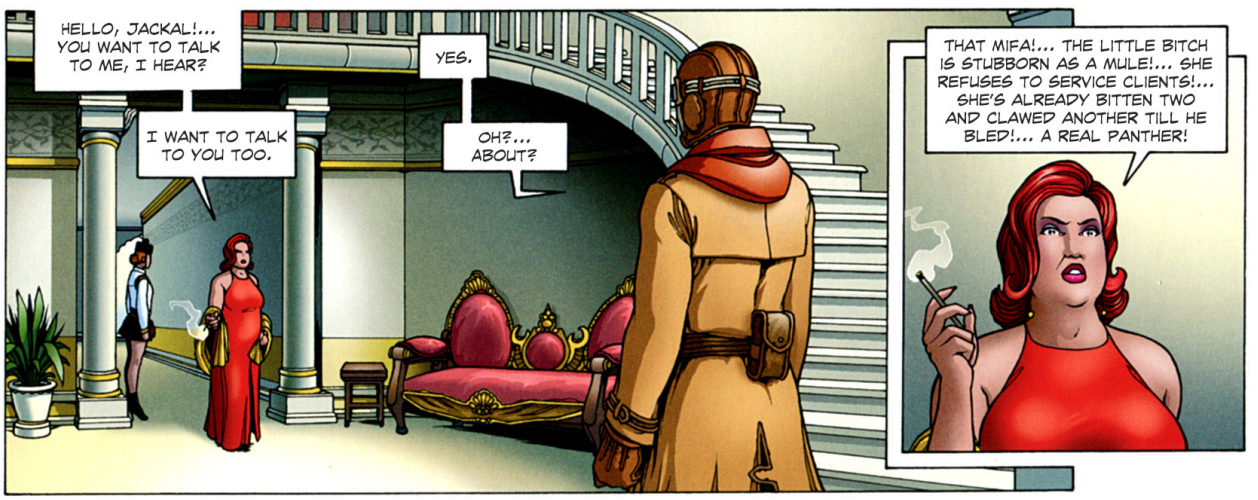

YOU'RE TAKING ME TO THE LAKE PALACE!... WHERE'S YOUR HOVERCRAFT?

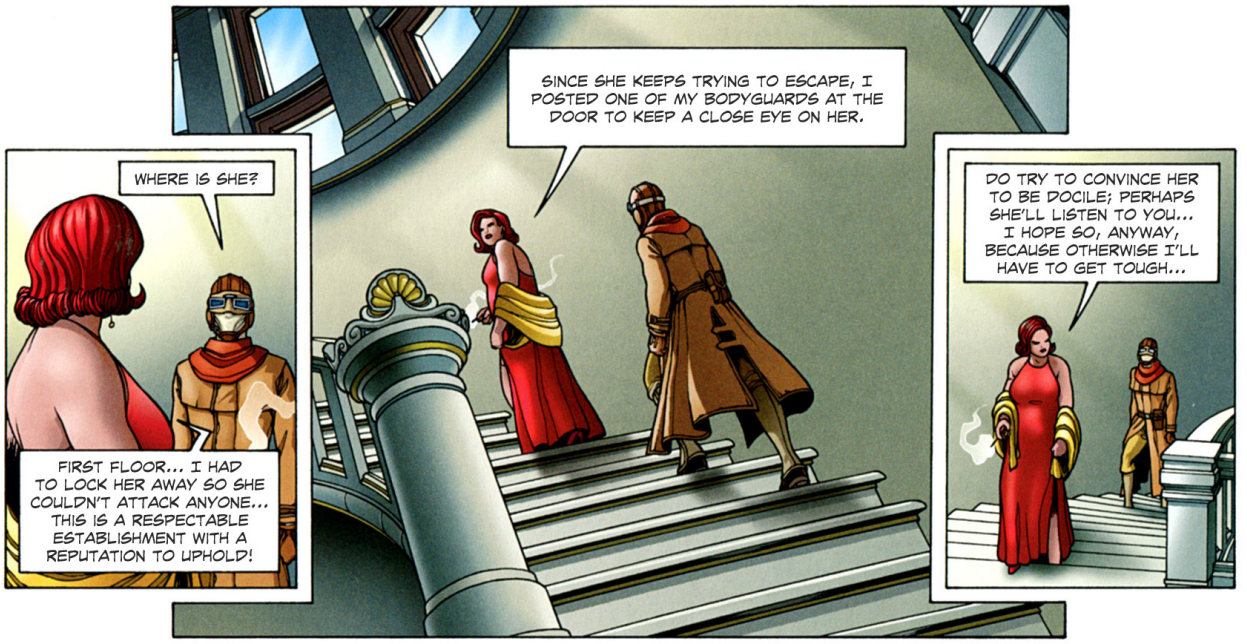
?!
?!
THE SPINNING WALL TRICK!... I'VE SEEN IT IN MOVIES BEFORE, BUT NEVER IN REAL LIFE!... I CAN'T FIND A HIDDEN BUTTON ON THIS PILLAR, I WONDER HOW HE ACTIVATED THE OPENING MECHANISM?
WITH A REMOTE IN HIS POCKET, NO DOUBT.
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
HE GOT US, THE BASTARD!... IT'S OVER NOW, WE'LL NEVER GET INTO THE LAKE PALACE WITHOUT HIM.


HI, I'M TATYANA, AND MY MEASUREMENTS ARE 120-60-90!... IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME...
...COME SEE FOR YOURSELF!... I'M WAITING IN ROOM 110!
THEY CALL ME "LA BOMBA"!... VISIT ME IN ROOM 106 AND YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY!

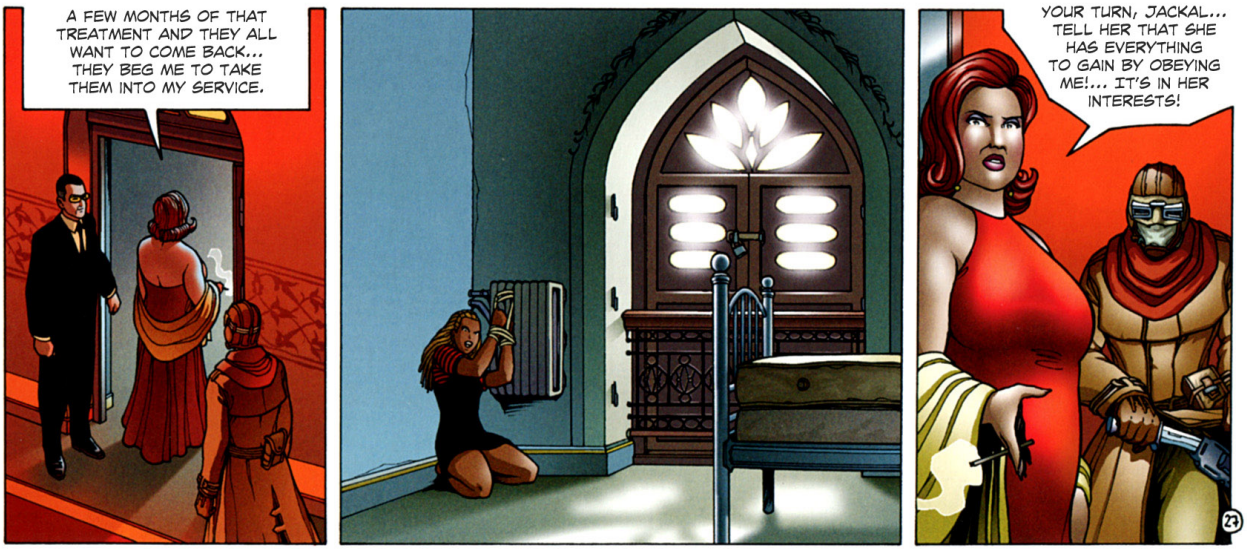

MADAM JULIA, THE JACKAL WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU... HE SAYS IT'S IMPORTANT.

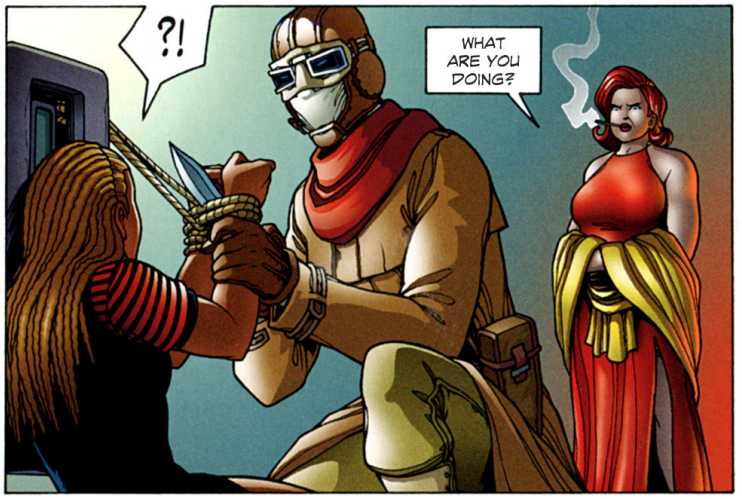

I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE HIM COMING WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT, BUT HE WAS SO INSISTENT THAT I EVENTUALLY LET HIM IN... HE'S WAITING IN THE LOBBY.


HELLO, JACKAL!... YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME, I HEAR?
I WANT TO TALK TO YOU TOO.
YES.
OH?... ABOUT?
THAT MIFA!... THE LITTLE BITCH IS STUBBORN AS A MULE!... SHE REFUSES TO SERVICE CLIENTS!... SHE'S ALREADY BITTEN TWO AND CLAWED ANOTHER TILL HE BLED!... A REAL PANTHER!


WHERE IS SHE?
FIRST FLOOR... I HAD TO LOCK HER AWAY SO SHE COULDN'T ATTACK ANYONE... THIS IS A RESPECTABLE ESTABLISHMENT WITH A REPUTATION TO UPHOLD!
SINCE SHE KEEPS TRYING TO ESCAPE, I POSTED ONE OF MY BODYGUARDS AT THE DOOR TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HER.
DO TRY TO CONVINCE HER TO BE DOCILE; PERHAPS SHE'LL LISTEN TO YOU... I HOPE SO, ANYWAY, BECAUSE OTHERWISE I'LL HAVE TO GET TOUGH...

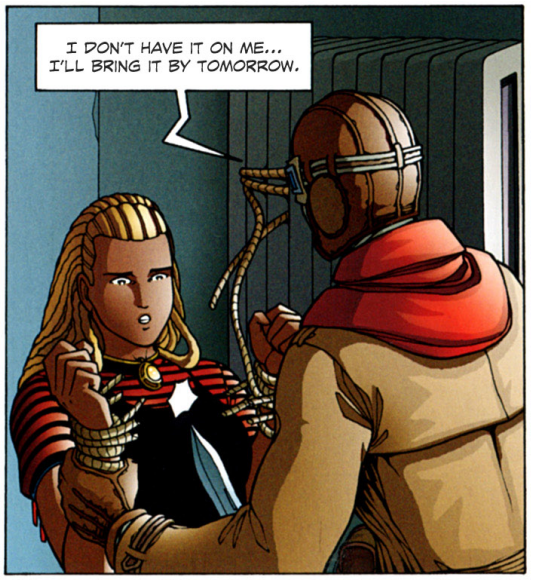
...AND SEND HER TO LEARN THE TRADE IN A WHOREHOUSE IN THE PROJECTS. NOTHING LIKE A STAY THERE TO TAME EVEN THE MOST DIFFICULT... AT 40 TRICKS A DAY, THE GIRLS QUICKLY LEARN THEIR LESSON!


A FEW MONTHS OF THAT TREATMENT AND THEY ALL WANT TO COME BACK... THEY BEG ME TO TAKE THEM INTO MY SERVICE.
YOUR TURN, JACKAL... TELL HER THAT SHE HAS EVERYTHING TO GAIN BY OBEYING ME!... IT'S IN HER INTERESTS!


?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

TAKING HER... IF SHE'S NO GOOD, THERE'S NO POINT IN HER STAYING HERE... I'LL TAKE HER, AND FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO SELL HER TO.

AS YOU WISH... BUT I PAID SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR HER. RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY, OR SHE ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE, YOU UNDERSTAND?


I DON'T HAVE IT ON ME... I'LL BRING IT BY TOMORROW.

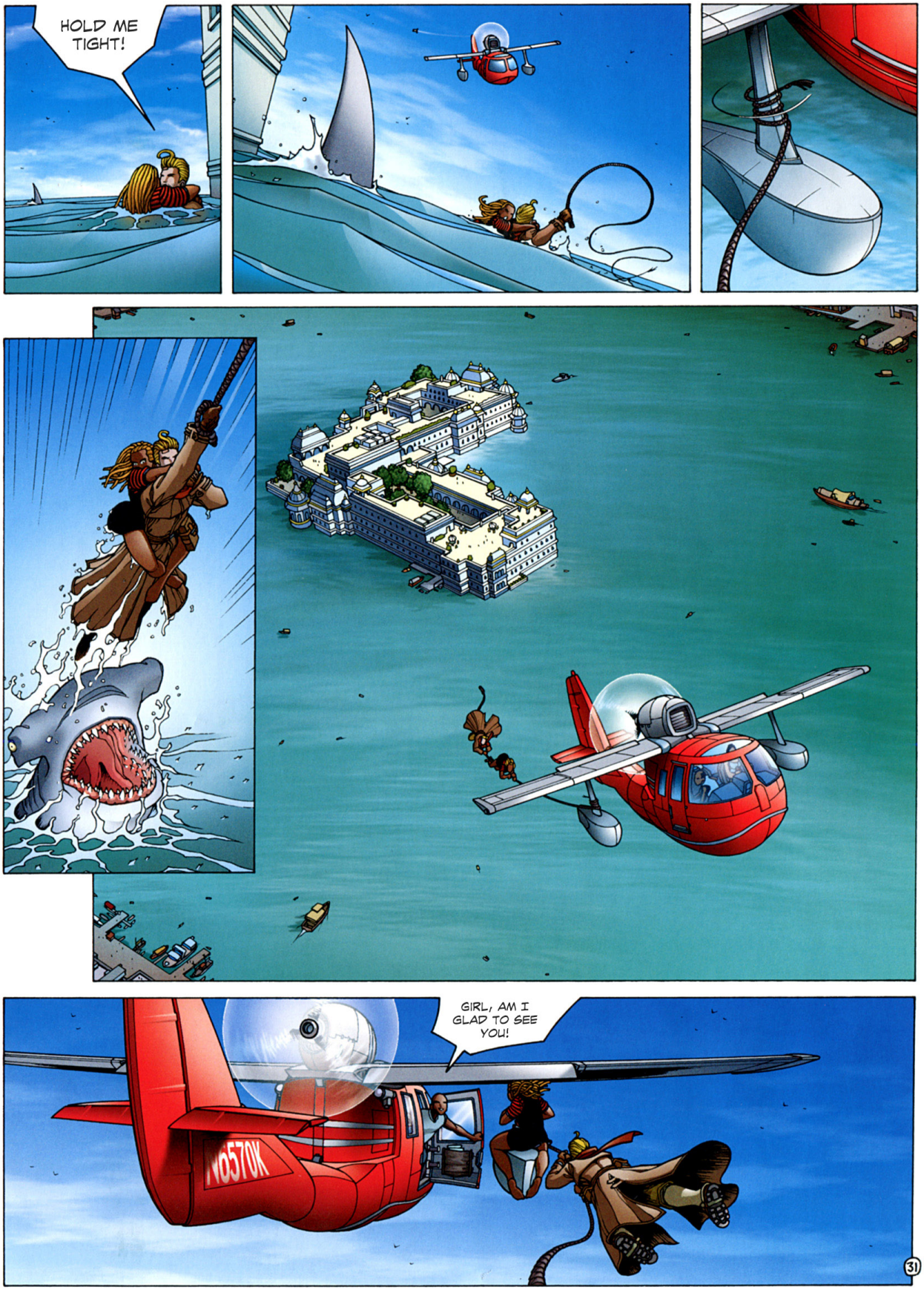
?!
DROP THE KNIFE!

MADAME JULIA SAID SHE WANTS THE MONEY NOW!... ARE YOU DEAF, OR WHAT?

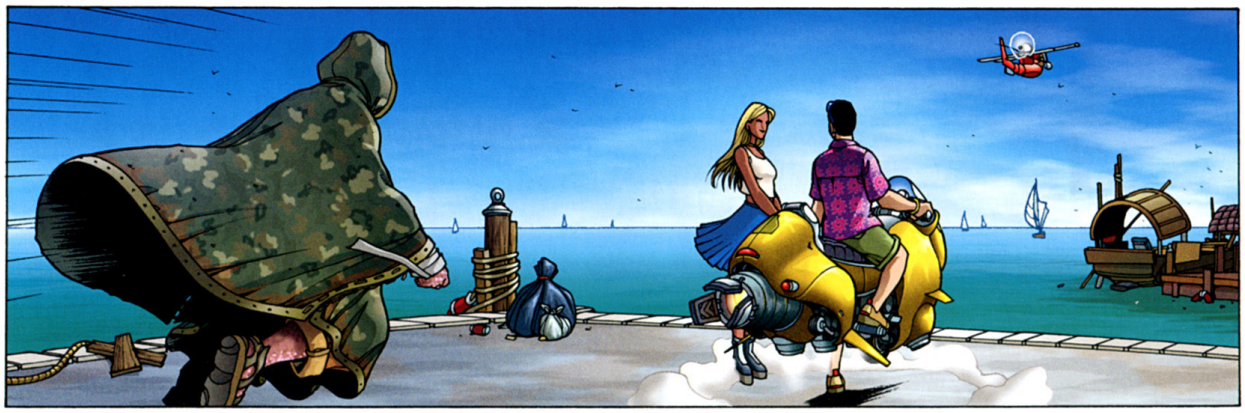
I'LL BET YOU'D HEAR BETTER WITHOUT THIS THING!... HOLD STILL WHILE I REMOVE IT AND GET A GOOD LOOK AT THAT MUG OF YOURS!... I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHY YOU HIDE IT!

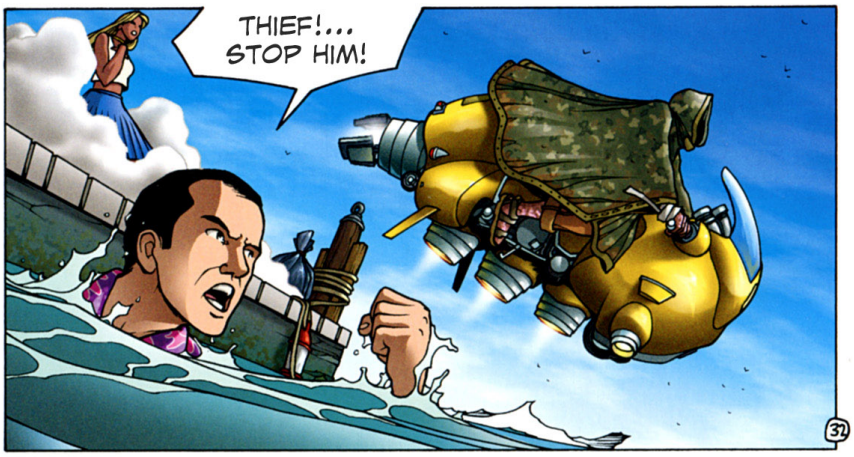
?!
?!
CATCH HER, QUICKLY!... DON'T LET HER ESCAPE!
MAY I?
LITTLE SLUT!... I'M GONNA BREAK YOU, YOU'LL SEE!
?!

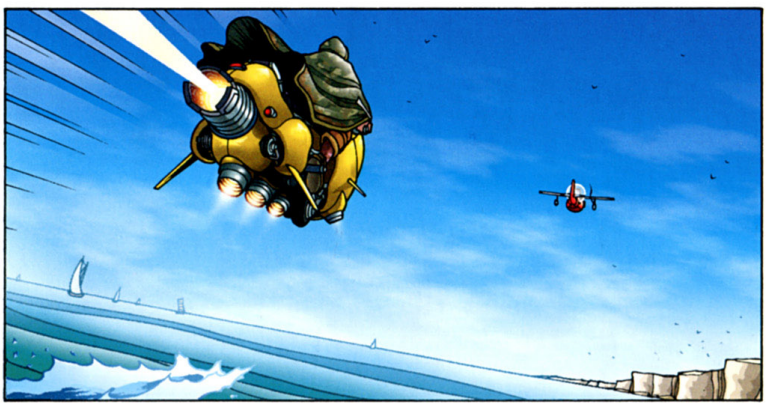
?!
?!
30

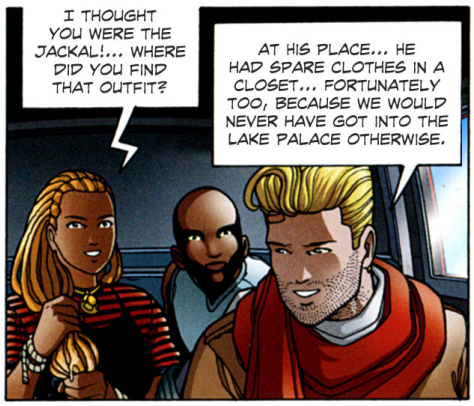

HOLD ME TIGHT!
GIRL, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
N0570K

?!
H... HIM!



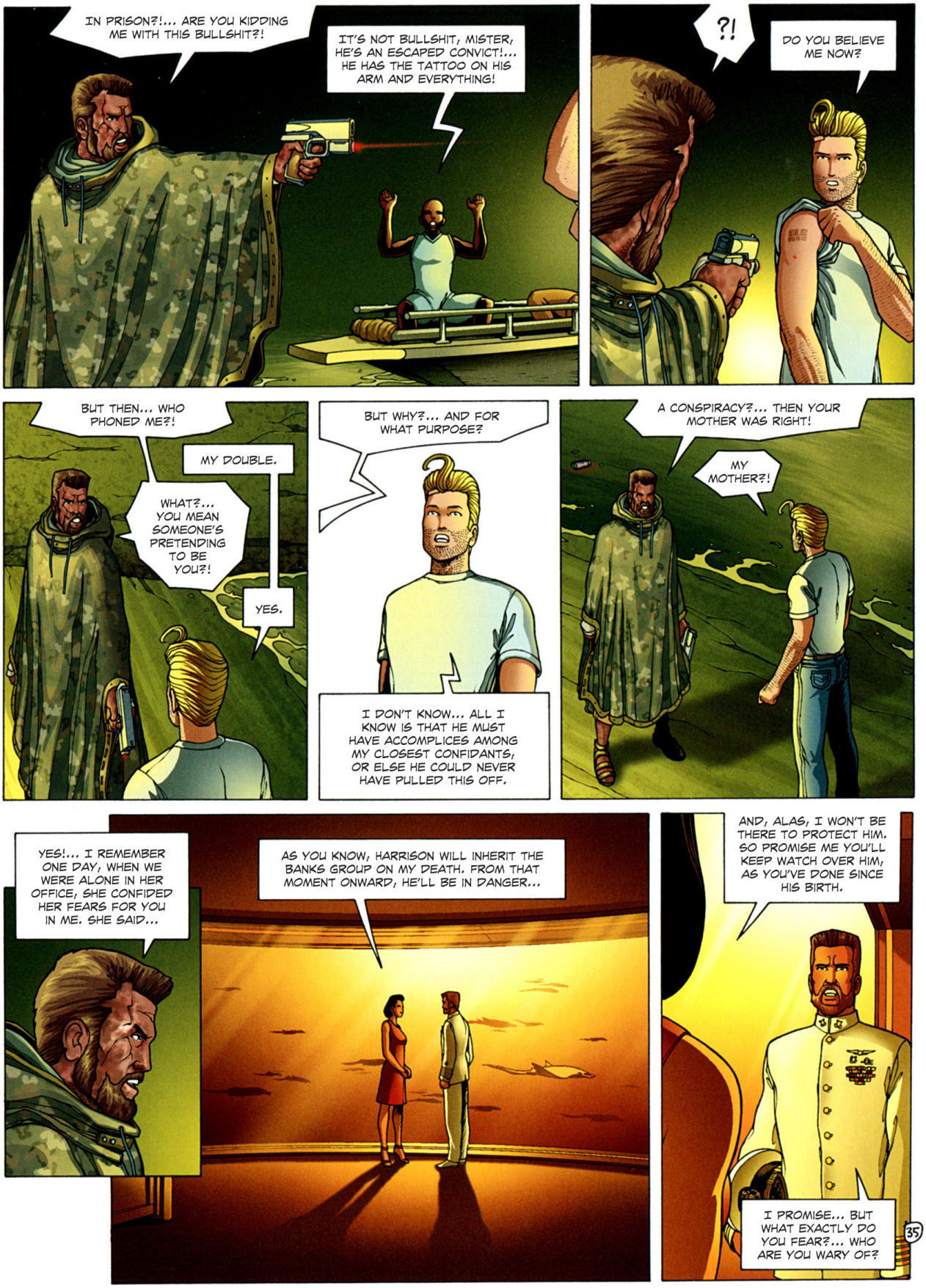

THIEF!... STOP HIM!

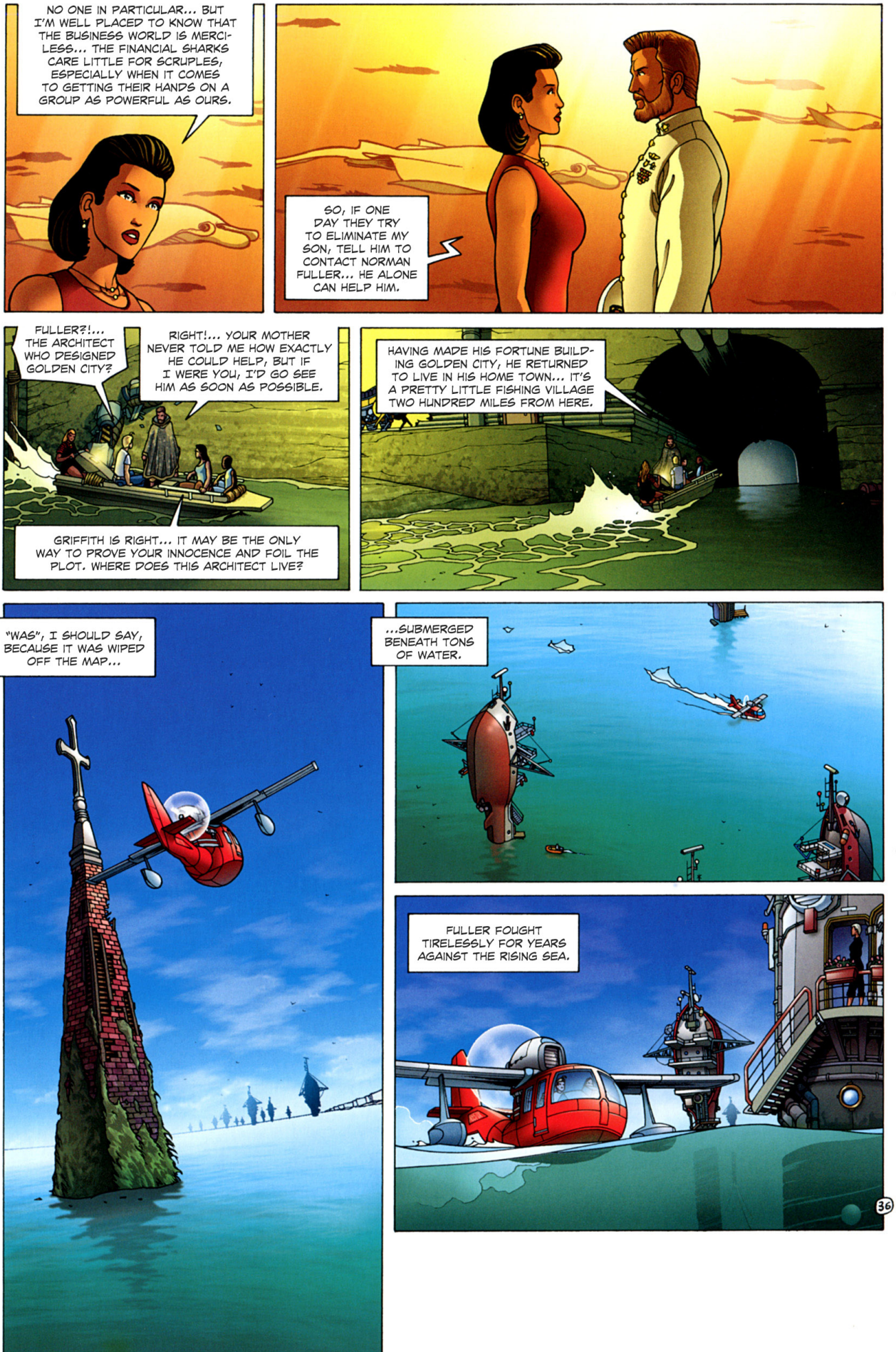


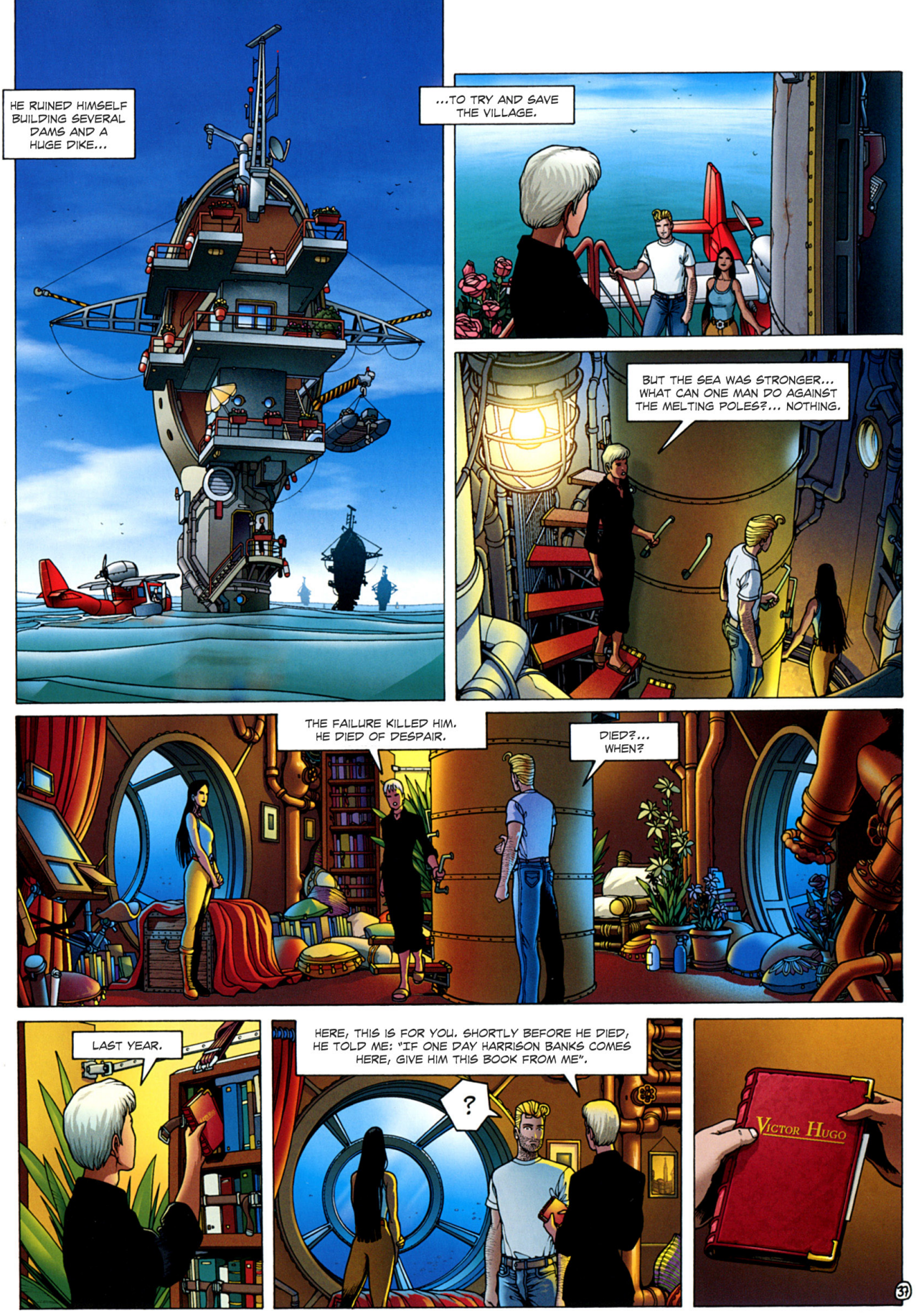

I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE JACKAL!... WHERE DID YOU FIND THAT OUTFIT?
AT HIS PLACE... HE HAD SPARE CLOTHES IN A CLOSET... FORTUNATELY TOO, BECAUSE WE WOULD NEVER HAVE GOT INTO THE LAKE PALACE OTHERWISE.

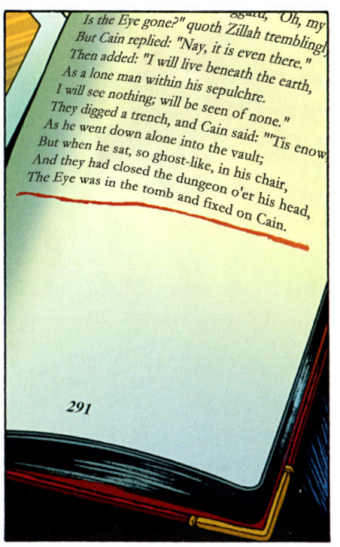
HARRISON TOOK A LOT OF RISKS TO GET YOU OUT, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE HAS THE COPS ON HIS ASS!... SO, TO THANK HIM, YOU COULD TELL HIM WHERE TO FIND THE HYDRO-JETS. HE REALLY NEEDS THEM.
WHAT HYDROJETS?
THE ONES BELONGING TO THOSE TWO GOLDEN CITY COPS, REMEMBER?... WE KEPT YOUR SECRET BECAUSE YOU TOLD US NOT TO TALK ABOUT THEM, BUT SURELY YOU'LL TELL HIM AFTER ALL HE'S DONE FOR YOU?
THEY'RE IN A SEWER NEAR THE OLD HARBOR ZONE... BUT THERE'S NO WAY YOUR SEAPLANE WILL FIT INSIDE, IT'S MUCH TOO BIG. SO...
...IT WOULD BE BEST TO FETCH MY BOAT FIRST.
THEY'RE IN A PITIFUL STATE!
NO PROBLEM! I KNOW A SUPER MECHANIC. I'M SURE HE CAN FIX THEM... HE DOESN'T LIVE FAR AWAY, SHOULD I GO GET HIM?
NO, THANK YOU... IT'S OVER ANYWAY. I WAS PLANNING TO WEAR A POLICEMAN'S COVERALL AND HELMET TO SLIP INTO GOLDEN CITY INCOGNITO, BUT IT SEEMS SOMEONE HAS STRIPPED THEM OF THEIR UNIFORMS... I WONDER WHY?
TO SELL, OBVIOUSLY!... UNIFORMS LIKE THAT ARE EXPENSIVE, BUT I'LL GIVE YOU A GOOD PRICE IF YOU TAKE THE LOT!
?!
?!
33

HANDS IN THE AIR, ALL OF YOU!
YOU, KID, JOIN THE OTHERS ON THE BOAT! STAY COOL AND EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE!... IT'S NOT YOU I WANT TO KILL...
IT'S HIM!
ME?!... BUT WHY?... WHO ARE YOU?
A GHOST!
G... GRIFFITH?
YEAH, IT'S ME!... YOU DIDN'T EXPECT TO SEE ME AGAIN, HUH?... YOU THOUGHT I DIED IN THE EXPLOSION!
WHAT EXPLOSION?
THE BOMB YOU HID ON YOUR CATAMARAN TO KILL ALL MY MEN!.. BUT BY SOME MIRACLE I SURVIVED YOUR TRAP... AND THOUGH GRIEVOUSLY WOUNDED, I MANAGED TO REACH THE MAINLAND WHERE FISHERMEN TOOK CARE OF ME.
LISTEN, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!... WHAT BOMB?... WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN?
SIX MONTHS AGO!... DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED, YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!... YOU CALLED TO TELL ME THAT SOMEONE HAD STOLEN YOUR FUCKING CATAMARAN, WHEN IN REALITY IT WAS JUST A PRETEXT TO SEND ME TO MY DEATH!
IT WASN'T ME WHO CALLED YOU, GRIFFITH, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!...
WHY?
BECAUSE I WAS IN PRISON SIX MONTHS AGO!


IN PRISON?!... ARE YOU KIDDING ME WITH THIS BULLSHIT?!
IT'S NOT BULLSHIT, MISTER, HE'S AN ESCAPED CONVICT!... HE HAS THE TATTOO ON HIS ARM AND EVERYTHING!
?!
DO YOU BELIEVE ME NOW?
BUT THEN... WHO PHONED ME?!
MY DOUBLE.
WHAT?... YOU MEAN SOMEONE'S PRETENDING TO BE YOU?!
YES.
BUT WHY?... AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
I DON'T KNOW... ALL I KNOW IS THAT HE MUST HAVE ACCOMPLICES AMONG MY CLOSEST CONFIDANTS, OR ELSE HE COULD NEVER HAVE PULLED THIS OFF.
A CONSPIRACY?... THEN YOUR MOTHER WAS RIGHT!
MY MOTHER?!
YES!... I REMEMBER ONE DAY, WHEN WE WERE ALONE IN HER OFFICE, SHE CONFIDED HER FEARS FOR YOU IN ME. SHE SAID...
AS YOU KNOW, HARRISON WILL INHERIT THE BANKS GROUP ON MY DEATH. FROM THAT MOMENT ONWARD, HE'LL BE IN DANGER...
AND, ALAS, I WON'T BE THERE TO PROTECT HIM. SO PROMISE ME YOU'LL KEEP WATCH OVER HIM, AS YOU'VE DONE SINCE HIS BIRTH.
I PROMISE... BUT WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU FEAR?... WHO ARE YOU WARY OF?


NO ONE IN PARTICULAR... BUT I'M WELL PLACED TO KNOW THAT THE BUSINESS WORLD IS MERCILESS... THE FINANCIAL SHARKS CARE LITTLE FOR SCRUPLES, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING THEIR HANDS ON A GROUP AS POWERFUL AS OURS.
SO, IF ONE DAY THEY TRY TO ELIMINATE MY SON, TELL HIM TO CONTACT NORMAN FULLER... HE ALONE CAN HELP HIM.
FULLER?!... THE ARCHITECT WHO DESIGNED GOLDEN CITY?
RIGHT!... YOUR MOTHER NEVER TOLD ME HOW EXACTLY HE COULD HELP, BUT IF I WERE YOU, I'D GO SEE HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
GRIFFITH IS RIGHT... IT MAY BE THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE YOUR INNOCENCE AND FOIL THE PLOT. WHERE DOES THIS ARCHITECT LIVE?
HAVING MADE HIS FORTUNE BUILDING GOLDEN CITY, HE RETURNED TO LIVE IN HIS HOME TOWN... IT'S A PRETTY LITTLE FISHING VILLAGE TWO HUNDRED MILES FROM HERE.
"WAS", I SHOULD SAY, BECAUSE IT WAS WIPED OFF THE MAP...
...SUBMERGED BENEATH TONS OF WATER.
FULLER FOUGHT TIRELESSLY FOR YEARS AGAINST THE RISING SEA.


HE RUINED HIMSELF BUILDING SEVERAL DAMS AND A HUGE DIKE...
...TO TRY AND SAVE THE VILLAGE.
BUT THE SEA WAS STRONGER... WHAT CAN ONE MAN DO AGAINST THE MELTING POLES?... NOTHING.
THE FAILURE KILLED HIM. HE DIED OF DESPAIR.
DIED?... WHEN?
LAST YEAR.
HERE, THIS IS FOR YOU. SHORTLY BEFORE HE DIED, HE TOLD ME: "IF ONE DAY HARRISON BANKS COMES HERE, GIVE HIM THIS BOOK FROM ME".
?
VICTOR HUGO


Is the Eye gone?" quoth Zillah trembling!
But Cain replied: "Nay, it is even there."
Then added: "I will live beneath the earth,
As a lone man within his sepulchre.
I will see nothing; will be seen of none."
They digged a trench, and Cain said: "'Tis enow
As he went down alone into the vault;
But when he sat, so ghost-like, in his chair,
And they had closed the dungeon o'er his head,
The Eye was in the tomb and fixed on Cain.
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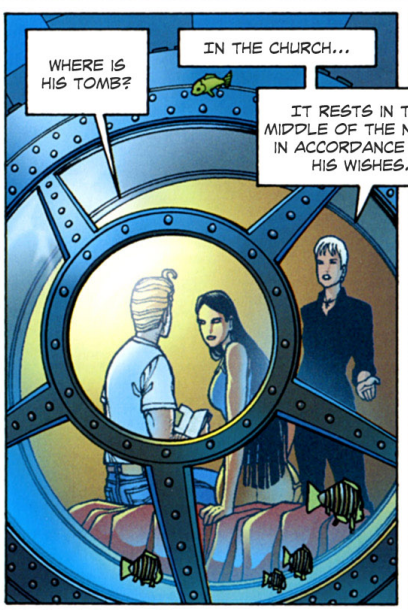
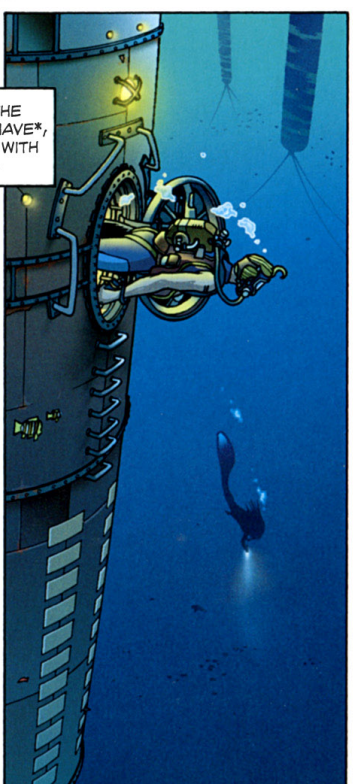
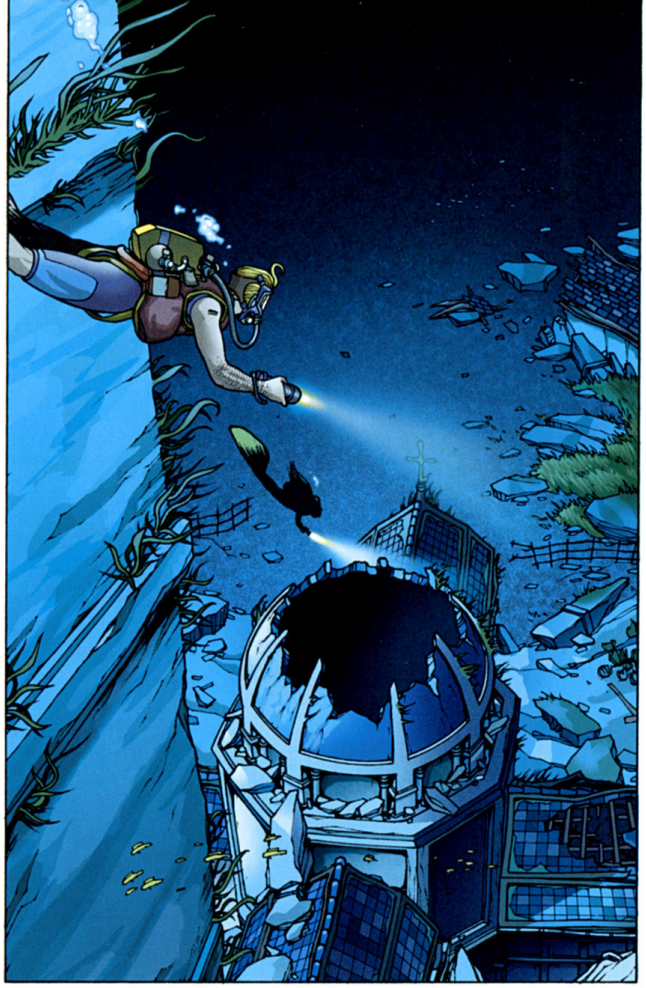
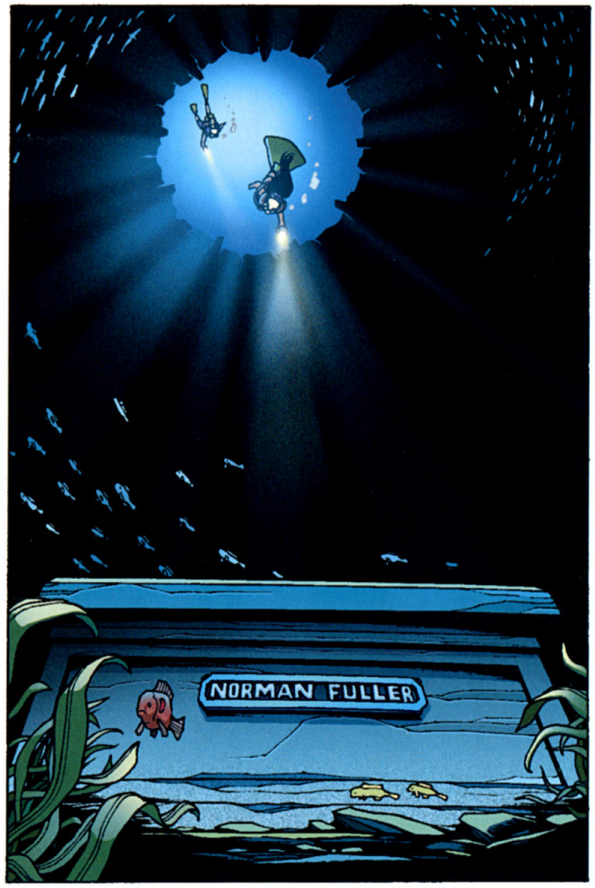
THAT DOESN'T PROVE ANYTHING... IT MAY BE A COINCIDENCE.
I VERY MUCH DOUBT IT... FULLER WASN'T THE SORT OF MAN TO DO THINGS BY CHANCE... I THINK HE HIGHLIGHTED THAT LINE DELIBERATELY TO SEND ME A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAVE.

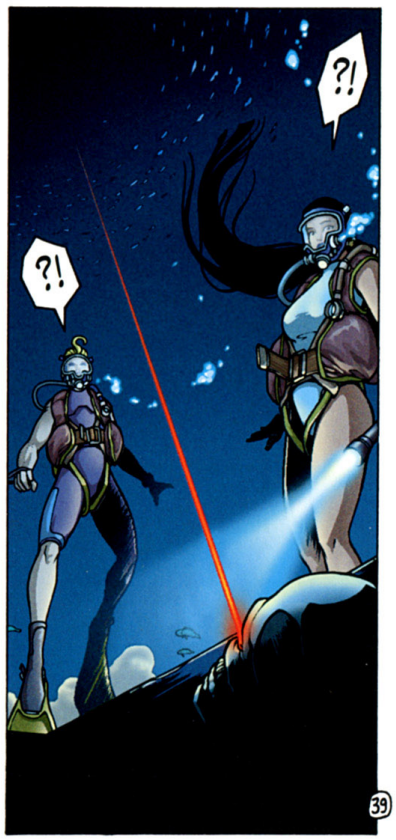


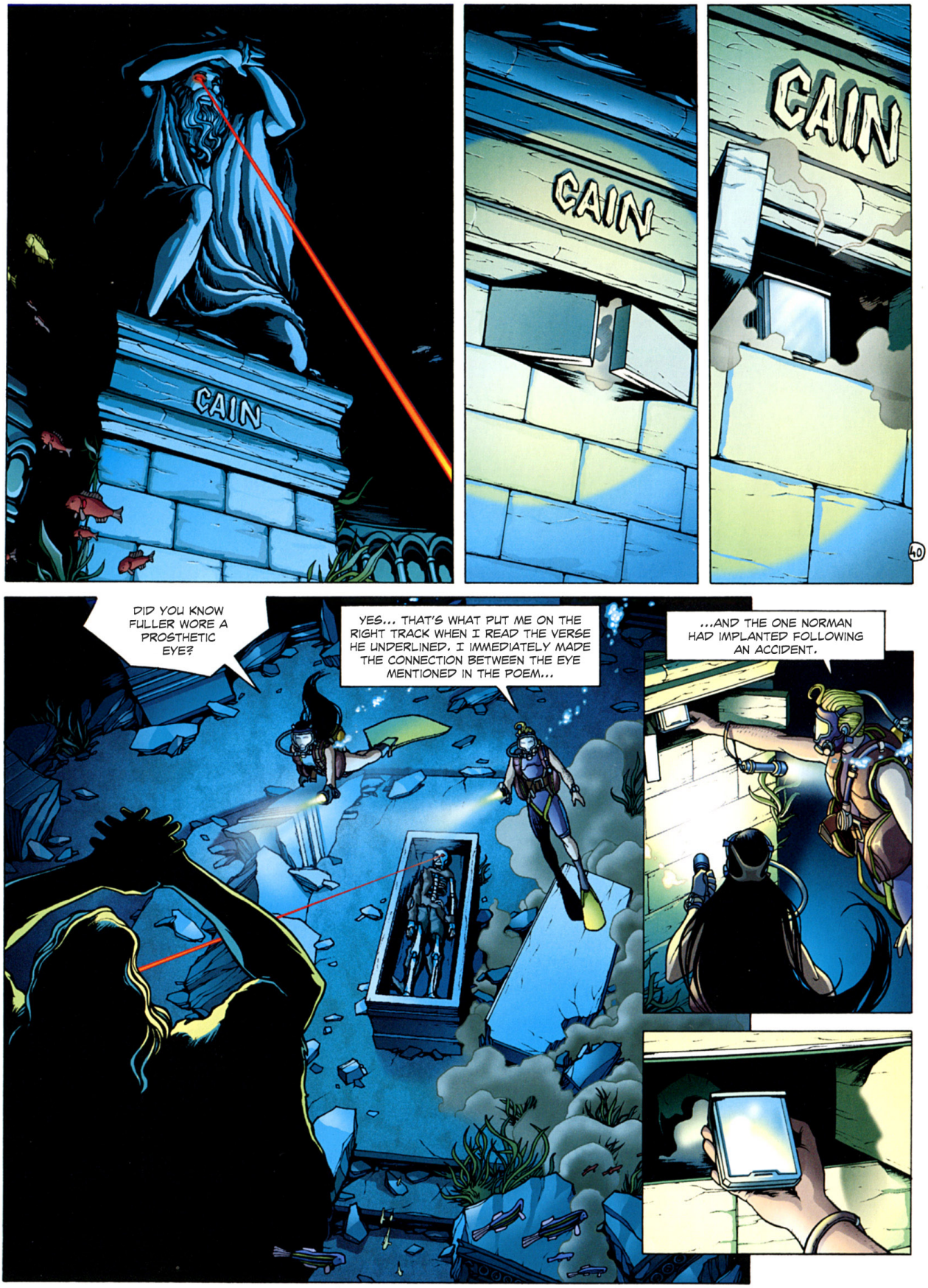


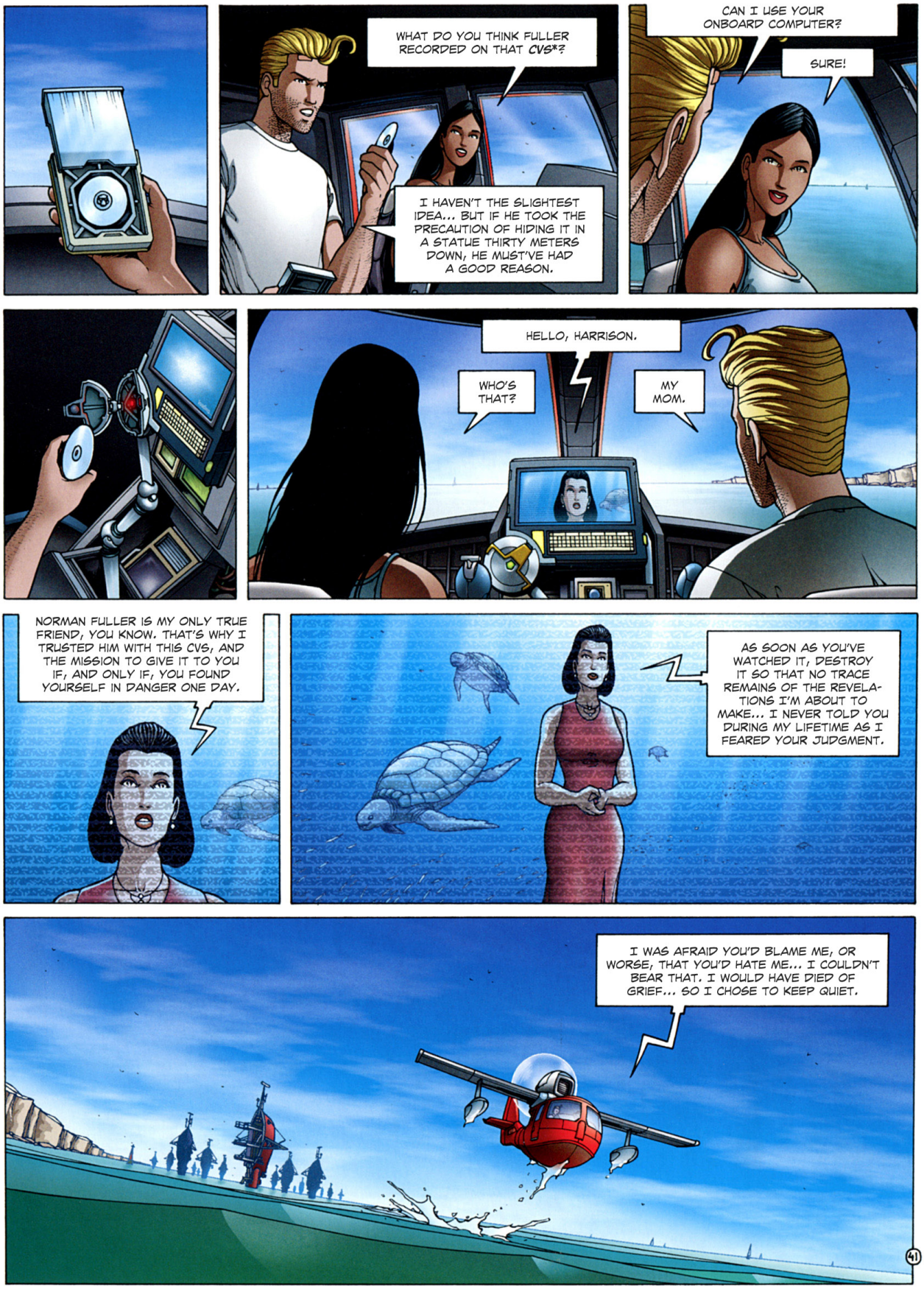
* THE MAIN BODY OF THE CHURCH, PROVIDING THE CENTRAL APPROACH TO THE HIGH ALTAR.



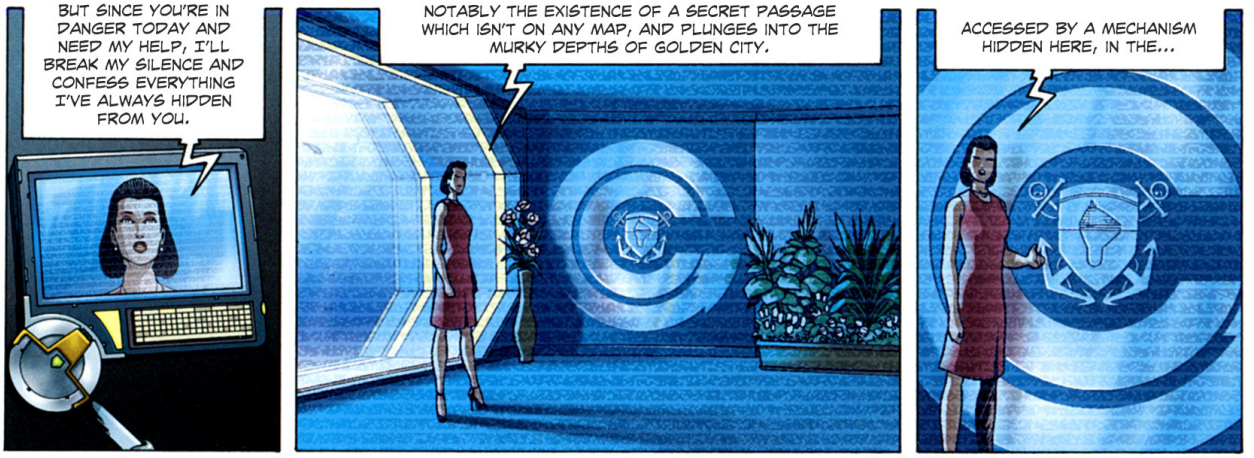

NORMAN FULLER


?!
?!

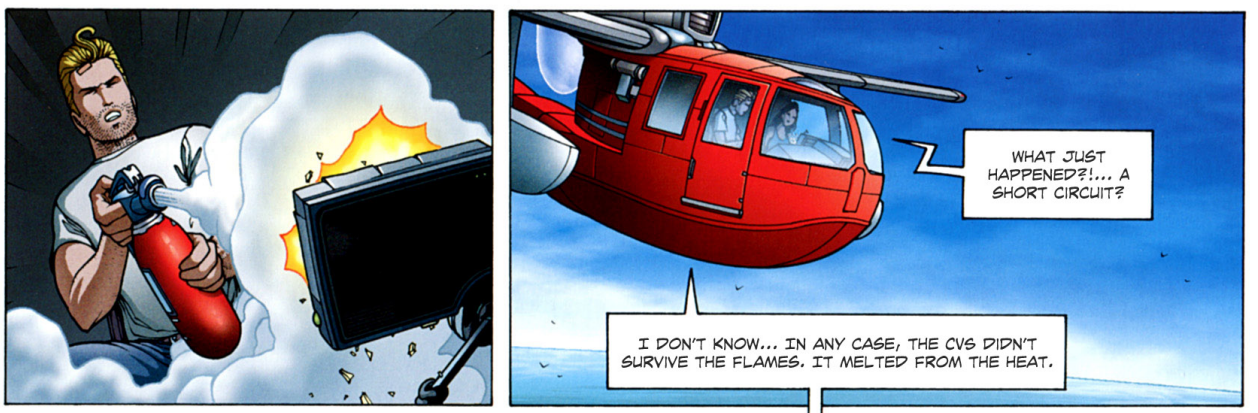

CAIN
CAIN
CAIN
DID YOU KNOW FULLER WORE A PROSTHETIC EYE?
YES... THAT'S WHAT PUT ME ON THE RIGHT TRACK WHEN I READ THE VERSE HE UNDERLINED. I IMMEDIATELY MADE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE EYE MENTIONED IN THE POEM...
...AND THE ONE NORMAN HAD IMPLANTED FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT.

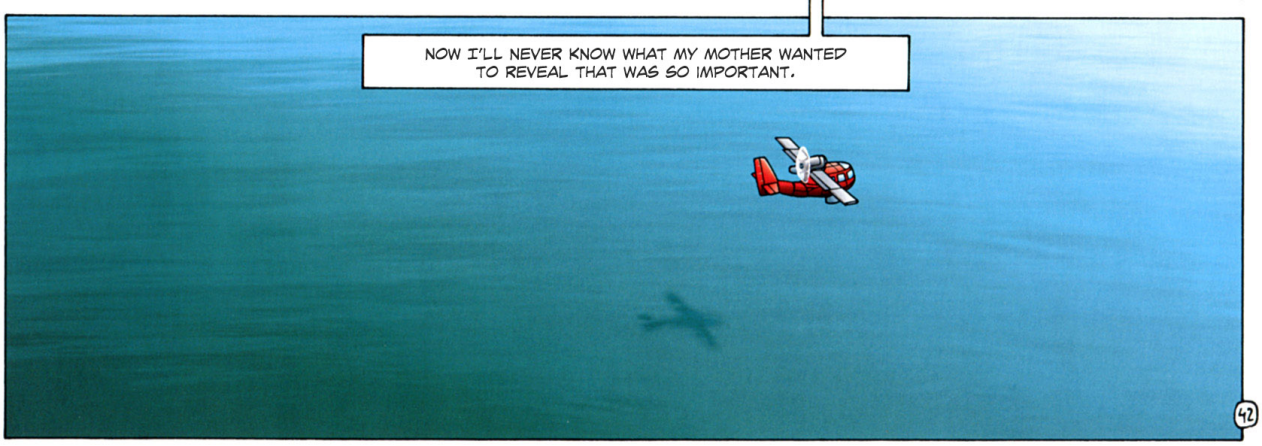

WHAT DO YOU THINK FULLER RECORDED ON THAT CVS*?
I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA... BUT IF HE TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF HIDING IT IN A STATUE THIRTY METERS DOWN, HE MUST'VE HAD A GOOD REASON.
CAN I USE YOUR ONBOARD COMPUTER?
SURE!
HELLO, HARRISON.
WHO'S THAT?
MY MOM.
NORMAN FULLER IS MY ONLY TRUE FRIEND, YOU KNOW. THAT'S WHY I TRUSTED HIM WITH THIS CVS, AND THE MISSION TO GIVE IT TO YOU IF, AND ONLY IF, YOU FOUND YOURSELF IN DANGER ONE DAY.
AS SOON AS YOU'VE WATCHED IT, DESTROY IT SO THAT NO TRACE REMAINS OF THE REVELATIONS I'M ABOUT TO MAKE... I NEVER TOLD YOU DURING MY LIFETIME AS I FEARED YOUR JUDGMENT.
I WAS AFRAID YOU'D BLAME ME, OR WORSE, THAT YOU'D HATE ME... I COULDN'T BEAR THAT. I WOULD HAVE DIED OF GRIEF... SO I CHOSE TO KEEP QUIET.

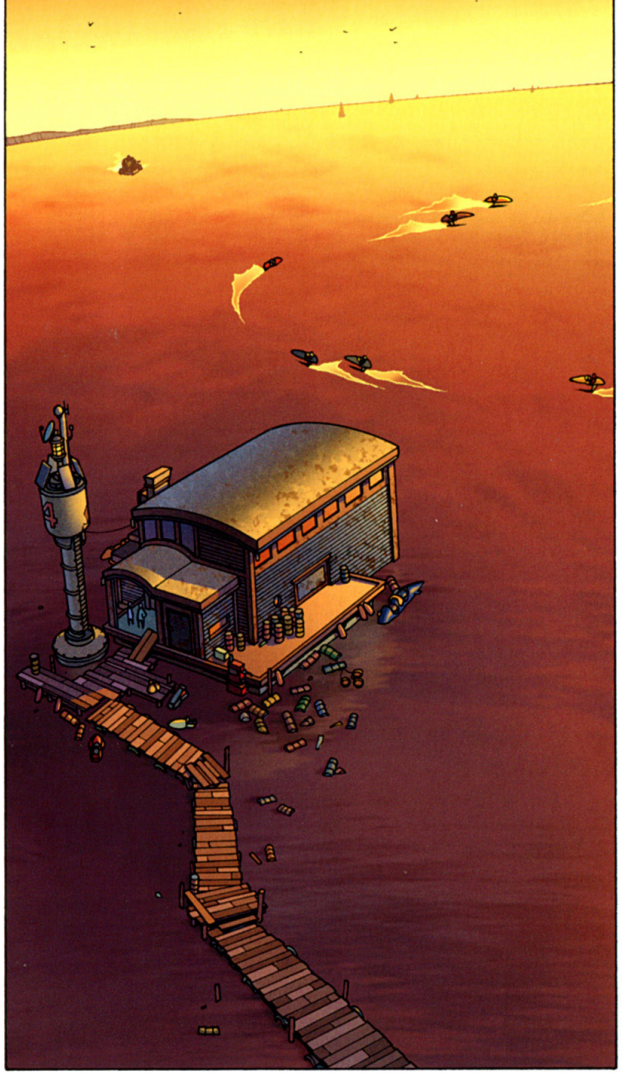
* COMPACT VISUAL STORAGE (CVS).

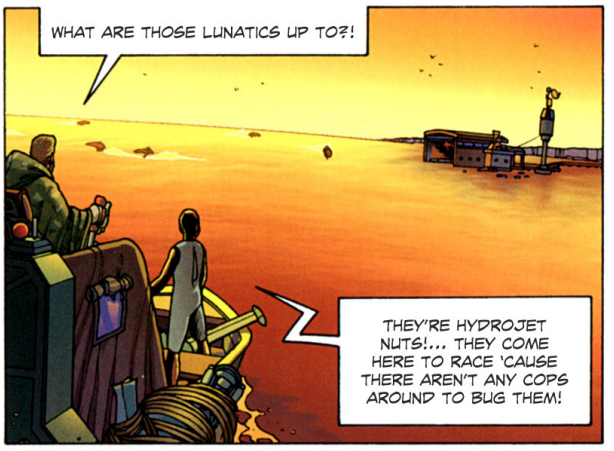

BUT SINCE YOU'RE IN DANGER TODAY AND NEED MY HELP, I'LL BREAK MY SILENCE AND CONFESS EVERYTHING I'VE ALWAYS HIDDEN FROM YOU.
NOTABLY THE EXISTENCE OF A SECRET PASSAGE WHICH ISN'T ON ANY MAP, AND PLUNGES INTO THE MURKY DEPTHS OF GOLDEN CITY.
ACCESSED BY A MECHANISM HIDDEN HERE, IN THE...

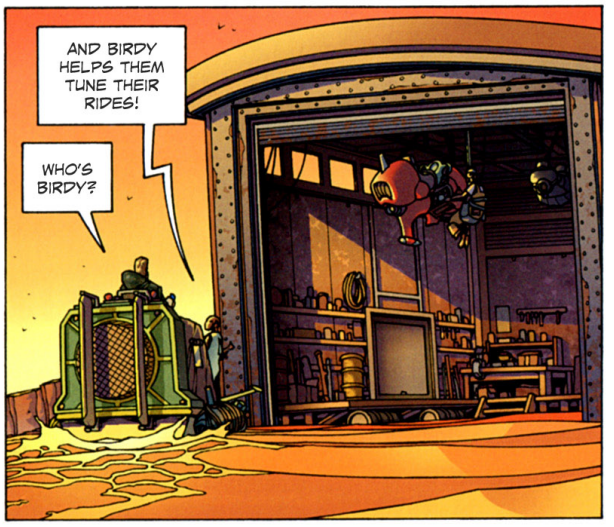
?!


WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!... A SHORT CIRCUIT?
I DON'T KNOW... IN ANY CASE, THE CVS DIDN'T SURVIVE THE FLAMES. IT MELTED FROM THE HEAT.


NOW I'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT MY MOTHER WANTED TO REVEAL THAT WAS SO IMPORTANT.



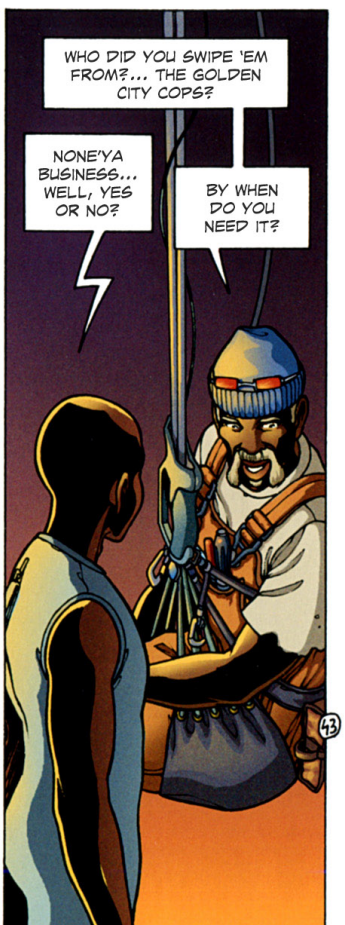

WHAT ARE THOSE LUNATICS UP TO?!
THEY'RE HYDROJET NUTS!... THEY COME HERE TO RACE 'CAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY COPS AROUND TO BUG THEM!

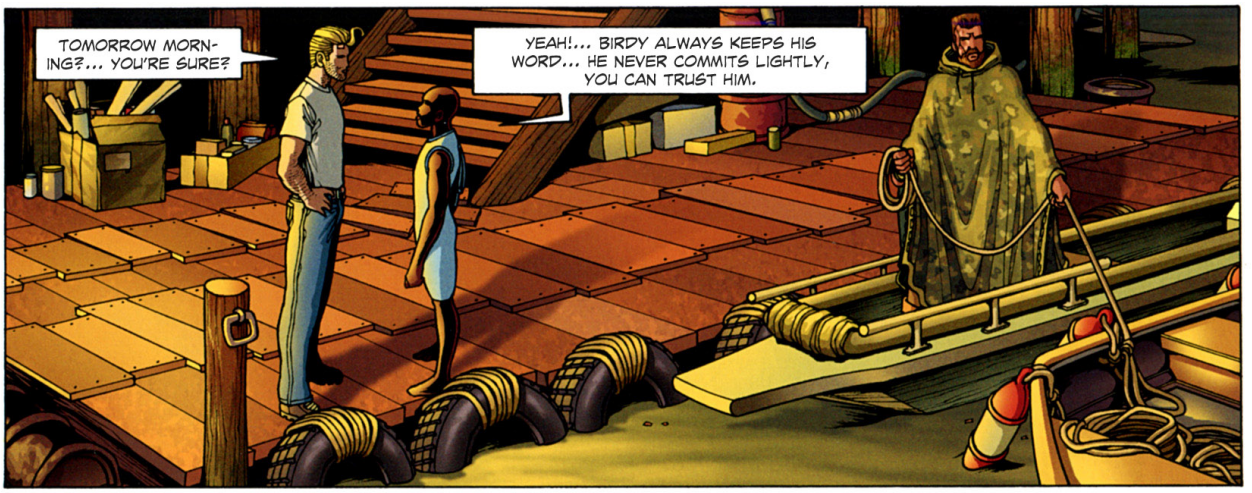

AND BIRDY HELPS THEM TUNE THEIR RIDES!
WHO'S BIRDY?

ME!... THEY CALL ME THAT BECAUSE I'M ALWAYS ALOFT AND WHISTLING. AIN'T THAT RIGHT, SOLO?
YEAH!... COME DOWN FROM YOUR PERCH, I'VE GOT A DEAL FOR YOU.

WHAT SORTA DEAL?... ANOTHER OF YOUR HARE-BRAINED SCHEMES THAT WON'T EARN ME A DIME?
DON'T BE LIKE THAT!... THIS TIME YOU'LL BE UP TO YOUR NUTS IN GOLD!

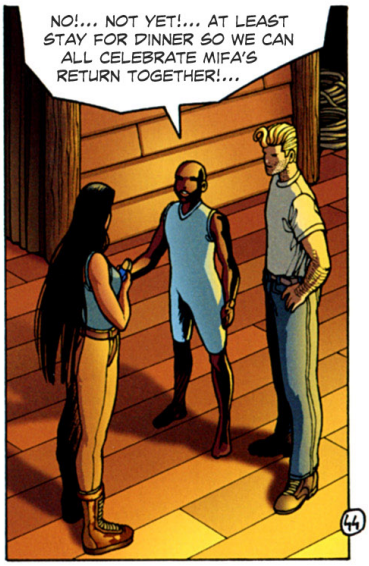
NEVER MIND MY NUTS! RATHER TELL ME WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIND...
WELL, IF YOU REPAIR ONE OF THESE HYDRO-JETS FOR ME, I'LL GIVE YOU THE OTHER AS PAYMENT... THEY'RE SUPER SWEET: YOU COULD SELL IT FOR A BUNDLE!


WHO DID YOU SWIPE 'EM FROM?... THE GOLDEN CITY COPS?
NONE'YA BUSINESS... WELL, YES OR NO?
BY WHEN DO YOU NEED IT?


TOMORROW MORNING?... YOU'RE SURE?
YEAH!... BIRDY ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD... HE NEVER COMMITS LIGHTLY, YOU CAN TRUST HIM.

HE SAID HE'D WORK ALL NIGHT IF NECESSARY TO FIX THE HYDROJET, AND HE'LL BRING IT BY AT DAWN.
PERFECT!... I'LL LEAVE FOR GOLDEN CITY AS SOON AS IT'S HERE!

THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC JUST CALLED: HE WANTS TO SEE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ABOUT A STORY... SO, SINCE YOU NO LONGER NEED ME, I'LL BE OFF.


NO!... NOT YET!... AT LEAST STAY FOR DINNER SO WE CAN ALL CELEBRATE MIFA'S RETURN TOGETHER!...
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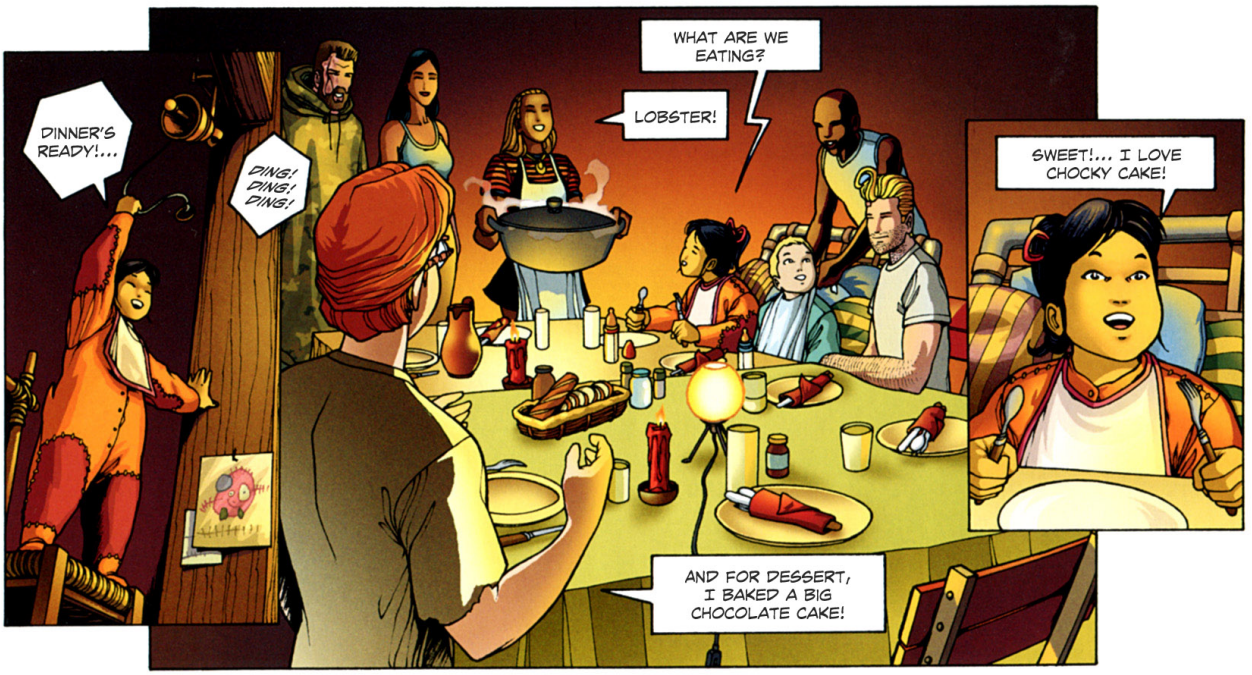
DINNER'S READY!...
DING! DING! DING!
WHAT ARE WE EATING?
LOBSTER!
SWEET!... I LOVE CHOCKY CAKE!
AND FOR DESSERT, I BAKED A BIG CHOCOLATE CAKE!

...AND AFTER A LOT OF EFFORT, I FINALLY PULLED HARRISON FROM THE COCKPIT AND TOOK HIM TO MY CABIN BY SKI-DOO.
IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT I SAW HIS TATTOO AND REALIZED THAT HE WAS AN ESCAPED CONVICT.
AND THAT DIDN'T SCARE YOU?
NO, ON THE CONTRARY: IT REMINDED ME OF MY FATHER, WHO WAS IMPRISONED IN THE ARCTIC PENITENTIARY WHEN I WAS A CHILD. AND HE DIDN'T KILL ANYONE EITHER.
HIS ONLY CRIME WAS BEING AN INUIT WHO OPPOSED POWERFUL PROPERTY DEVELOPERS WHO WANTED TO TURN HIS HOMELAND INTO A GIGANTIC HOTEL COMPLEX FOR WEALTHY TOURISTS.
HE BLEW UP ONE OF THEIR ONGOING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, AND IT COST HIM TEN YEARS HARD LABOR. WHEN HE CAME OUT, HE'D CHANGED SO MUCH I BARELY RECOGNIZED HIM.
THAT'S A SAD STORY.
YOU'RE RIGHT, SWEETIE, IT'S TOO SAD FOR LITTLE ONES LIKE YOU... IT'S BETTER NOT TO TALK ABOUT ALL THAT AND BESIDES, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO.
?!
MY CAKE!... HE TOOK MY CAKE!... GIVE IT BACK, YOU THIEF!
HA! HA! HA!
THAT WAS YOUR FOURTH SLICE!... YOU COULD LET HIM HAVE A PIECE, NO?

YOU THINK SHE'S IN LOVE WITH HIM?
OH, YEAH, IT'S SO OBVIOUS.
TO BED, GOSSIPS!... YOU SHOULDA BEEN ASLEEP A LONG TIME AGO!
HERE'S MY PHONE NUMBER... I'D REALLY LIKE IT IF YOU GAVE ME A CALL FROM TIME TO TIME... YOU'RE THE SORT OF GUY A GIRL COULD GET ATTACHED TO, AND I THINK I'M GOING TO MISS YOU A LOT.
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TO BE CONTINUED...
PECQUEUR & MALFIN

Genre
Adventure

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THE CHARACTERS

BANKS: The director of one of the most powerful pharmaceutical companies in the world, and husband to Jessica. Grew up in Golden City, an exclusive floating metropolis reserved only for the rich.

MIFA, APPLE, SOLO and KUMIKO: Orphans who were thrown out onto the streets. They've become a family, and live as Wreckers, plundering wrecks in the ocean depths.

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THE STORY

"Who is Goldy?" Sister Lea has no idea that asking that question saved the life of her childhood friend, Harrison Banks. But with Harrison in Amber's crosshairs and Mifa missing, it's but a small respite, and he's still a long way from unraveling the conspiracy that stole his life!